Encounter

April 1977 80p

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My Oxford

a Memoir

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Memo to Lord Annan's Committee

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Mutiny on the T. S. Eliot

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Edited by Melvin J Lasky & Anthony Thwaite

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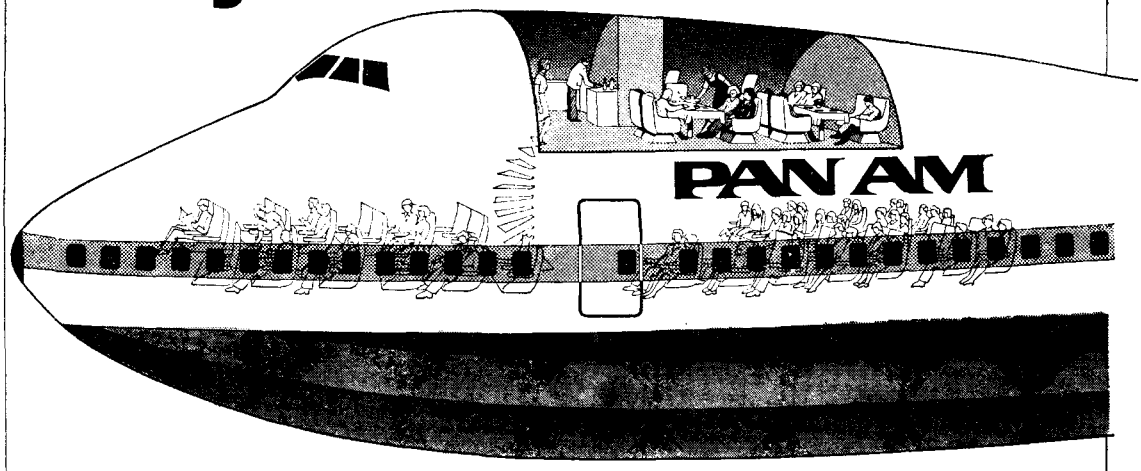

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Philip Purser

Mutiny on the T. S. Eliot

BEING INVITED to join the T. S. Eliot was a lucky break that somehow never paid off. It was 1953. I was still a reporter on the *Scottish Daily Mail* in Edinburgh, trying fitfully to make it as a playwright. The only place that had actually put on anything of mine was the little Byre Theatre in St Andrews, which at that time, before the university bought and rebuilt it, truly was a converted cowshed. But in the ant-race of Scottish letters reputations were gained on hopes and dreams as much as on achievement, and when Henry Sherek decided he needed an extra hand on *The Confidential Clerk* my name must have reached him in the bar of the New Club, or maybe the Scottish Arts. That I was an Englishman might have been the decisive recommendation, because whoever or whatever "Eliot" was, there was nothing Scottish about the Eliot plays. Sherek used to go on, when I knew him better, about how he'd rashly hired Fingal Lenzie, the raving Lallans poet and drunk, to work on *The Cocktail Party* the time before and how Fingal, apart from trying to introduce the odd "forby" or "anent", had wanted to switch the libation at the end of Act II from something in a decanter to Scotch and wee dumps.

Anyway, the message was to call on Sherek at the Caledonian Hotel. I knew him by reputation, of course. He was one of the last of the old single-handed impresarios, normally associated with the theatre at its most cosy and commercial. Yet he had famously produced that previous T. S. Eliot in every sense of the word, including that of a conjuror producing from a hat, and now intended to repeat the feat. Again the première would be part of the Edinburgh Festival. During the war he had been chief instructor at an infantry weapon training school in Marchmont which had left him with an affection for the city as well as a military bearing. He had a commanding girth, a bushy moustache and a bluff manner.

"Weren't you on a Three-inch mortar course of mine around 'forty-three?", he said by way of greeting.

"No, actually I was in the—"

"Thought so. Never forget a face, and there must have been thousands went through. Those were the days, eh? They tell me you write plays."

"Just a little trifle that was done up in—"

"As long as it has a beginning, a middle and an end. Not this twaddle that takes three hours to go nowhere, eh?"

"Well, you could say that it had—"

"What we need is practical craftsmanship. It's remarkable stuff of Tom's, remarkable. It just needs — er, bringing out." He called over his shoulder, "Isn't that so, Gurney?"

"If you say so", said a flat American voice. I had been vaguely aware of sounds coming from the bedroom which opened off the sitting room of the suite, or from the bathroom which opened off that, and had supposed it might be the maid or perhaps some little companion, theatre people being theatre people. The man who in fact emerged at this moment, holding a glass of water, had a tanned face, grizzled wiry hair, bright brown eyes and was no one's little companion. Sherek introduced us. Gurney smiled, nodded and said what I thought was "Welcome Aboard."

Sherek said, "What Gurney doesn't know about the mechanics of this business isn't worth knowing. He can strip a play down to all the bits and pieces, see which ones don't work, and then put it all together again. Can't you, Gurney? The only thing is that he

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sometimes gets into difficulties with our English idiom—you know, the understatement, the niceties, the chit-chat. The other day, for instance, he'd used the term 'gotten' instead of 'got'—"

"Okay, Henry, he takes the point."

"Sorry, Gurney. There is also the matter of—let me put it this way: how is your prosody?"

"It's all right, I think." I wasn't absolutely sure what prosody was.

"He means how's your ear for poetry."

"Oh, my play was in a sort of verse—"

"Spendid", said Sherek. He handed me a script bound in floppy vellum-like stuff. I peered inside. It was typed on a typewriter of large format, like a letter from Buckingham Palace. The lines indeed began with capital letters and were of unequal length.

"When can you start?" said Sherek.

"Well, straight away . . . except, what are the hours?"

"Whatever you fix with Gurney."

"All the hours of the day", said Gurney, "then some more. Or none. A writer writes hardest in his sleep. Otherwise, when you like as far as sitting down together goes. I'll be here."

What I had in mind was that it would be rash to give up the *Mail* on the strength of three or, at the most, four weeks work for Sherek. In any case you were required to give notice. By manipulating the insane roster in the reporters' room and doing some extra late shifts I ought to be able to manage most mornings and a good few afternoons.

LOOKING BACK, the matter-of-fact way in which I approached the whole deal amazes me. I felt no surprise that the plays of T. S. Eliot were evidently written by others. Must have suspected it all along. How could that austere voice I had heard on a gramophone record, harshly intoning *The Journey of the Magi*, have also framed a sophisticated drama which ran eight months in the West End? Maybe the basis of the plot was his, the doomy stuff that in any case was lifted from the Greeks, but that was all. Untreated Eliot was *Murder in the Cathedral*, or *The Family Reunion*, either of which would have closed Saturday if anyone had been fool enough to put it on commercially. There had to be professionals intervening, and now one of the professionals was me.

I took the script of *The Confidential Clerk* on duty at the office with me and read it, snorting, between the afternoon police and ambulance calls and drumming up a non-story from a local correspondent's copy about a parrot that could recite Burns. Jeez, what a lot of nonsense! The play, too. There was this financier, Sir Claude Mulhammer, and his dippy wife, Lady Elizabeth, and his old confidential clerk Eggerson who had just retired and the new boy, Colby Simpkins, who had taken over; and another young sharpy in the office called B. Kaghan and a girl called Lucasta whom Sir Claude fancied to be his daughter, because both he and Lady Elizabeth spent their time bemoaning their lack of children; in fact Lady Elizabeth decided that Colby was her long-lost bastard son, only he wasn't, it was the other one, Kaghan, all the time. If you're confused, so was I. And not a joke in view.

I said to Gurney next morning, "Why don't we scrap the lot and start again?—you know, junk the whole caboose."

He was sitting at the little table in his room in the Caledonian, which was less grand than Sherek's suite had been. A clean sheet of foolscap was wound into his portable, but littered around were most of the daily papers, plus *Newsweek* and *Variety* and several coffee pots and cups. Before answering my question he asked if I'd like coffee, peered inside the empty pots and rang down for further supplies.

He said, at last, "That would be one way. They gave me an epic once called *Straightway is the Night* which started on the road as a significant drama, if you know what I mean, about six travellers snowbound in a mountain cabin, and finally opened on Broadway as a comedy about these two couples and a little old lady ghost. Or there was the picture of *To Have and Have Not*, when all we were left with from Ernest Hemingway in the end was the title and maybe the fact that the guy ran a boat."

"Gosh, you worked on that?"

"Took my name off it." I was to learn that Gurney had taken his name off nearly every film he'd worked on.

I said, "Anyway, even the title is a stinker with us. Whoever heard of a confidential

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clerk these days? They're private secretaries."

"I wondered about that, Phil-lup"—he always broke my name down into two separate components.

"Or personal assistant, that's sometimes used. But not to a 'Financier' which is also old hat, and boring. Why don't we make him an aircraft manufacturer, like in *The Sound Barrier* or *All My Sons*? There is something very dramatic about aircraft manufacturers."

"In *All My Sons* it was actually airplane engines, and I never thought Arthur was too convincing on the technical detail. One cracked cylinder head, yes. A whole batch of cracked cylinder heads, and no one notices, not anywhere along the line, until one day these poor dumb fliers start popping into the deck one after the other. What the hell had the maintenance crews been doing?"

THE MORNING sped by. It was exhilarating to be treated as an equal by this professional of professionals who was on first name terms with all my heroes. That the sheet of paper in his typewriter remained unviolated was—well, it was only the first morning: we had to shake down together. For some reason a nautical image of the collaboration lodged itself in my fancy, perhaps because I thought Gurney had said "Welcome aboard" that time, though he was mystified when later I charged him with it.

"On the good ship T. S. Eliot", I'd sing to myself as I headed for the Caledonian, on the good days. It was Coronation Year and Edinburgh was hung all that summer with flags and bunting. Gurney was a friendly and generous companion, forever taking me down to the hotel restaurant for meals, or sometimes out to Aperitif or the Beehive or the White Cockade. In the hotel he signed the bill, at the other places he would always brush aside my feeble offers and settle it all himself. Whether he was able to reclaim much of this expense from Sherek I doubt. It was the way he had lived for fifteen or twenty years, and if this particular chore didn't pay so well the next one to come along would.

He talked freely and funnily of his writing (or re-writing) life, hardly at all of his private affairs. There was a colour snap of a little fair-haired girl of about eight propped up on his dressing table, same bright eyes and wide-spaced front teeth, and once an airletter addressed in a childish hand, but an occasional unemotive reference to his ex-wife—never without the prefix—was the only mention I ever heard of his marriage. He was from a Chicago Jewish background, not only self-made but largely self-educated. Starting with selling them in the street he had bust into newspapers first, until his spelling got him fired. It was still bizarre, I had already noticed from the scraps of revision on *The Confidential Clerk* he did eventually type out, and usually screw into the wastepaper basket: *persue*, *fantisy*, *manidge*, *insaine*. When once I met him for lunch, though, and forgot about the High Court Trial I was supposed to be covering so that when I fled back to the courts it was all over and the Press room, even, was empty and I had only a smudgy agency summary to work on, Gurney sat down and pounded out an imaginative version which made the most of the human element. I phoned it through to copy with a slight adjustment of idiom and got a surprised commendation from the news editor next day.

Gurney had gone on to do all the other things, like bumming across the Continent during the Depression and flying a B-25 in the Pacific War, between times somehow getting a toehold in Hollywood and eventually becoming a writer renowned for his ability to rescue screenplays in trouble. Through a director who worked both in films and the theatre he also became a play doctor.

"Did you never want to write your own things?" I asked him early on.

"If you're in the repair business you lose that awe for the geniuses who build the automobiles." But he did let slip soon afterwards that he had once taken six months off to write the play he'd always wanted to write.

"What happened to it?"

"There was interest, there was interest. Then I looked at the script again and it was no better, no worse, than all the crud I spent my life working on. I left it with my ex-wife when I moved out."

Meanwhile it was a nagging fact that we were making little progress. Even my suggestions for a change of title got nowhere. "I've been thinking about it", Gurney said.

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He had the script open at the last page, almost. "At the end, Colby is going to quit the job of confidential clerk and go and stay with old Eggerson and play the organ in church. Right?"

"Yes, but—"

"Eggerson says he'll be able to teach some piano on the side, that sort of thing. But this is the clue. Listen: he says, 'I don't see you spending a lifetime as an organist. I think you'll come to find you've another vocation. We worked together every day, you know, for quite a little time and I've watched you pretty closely. Mr Simpkins, you'll be thinking of reading for orders.'"

He read it in his usual growly monotone but I felt another twinge of a suspicion that had been growing, that I was too often getting the sense of the text for the first time. I'd completely missed the significance of that line.

Gurney was saying, "I seem to remember from some Shakespeare play, I forget which, that a clerk used to mean a priest—"

All right, of course, though it was only fair to reflect that pronouncing the word "clurk", that little bit closer in sound to "cleric" than our "clark", did make it much easier to spot.

I said, "That's right: a clerk in holy orders."

"There is also a kind of spiritual quality about both these people who are, or have been, the confidential clerk: the way they bring out the best in others, the calling they feel—to music in Colby's case, to gardening in Eggerson's. We have to ask ourselves if the word 'clerk' is not an echo this man Eliot is after, and whether we ought to leave it . . . ?"

IT WAS THE SAME with five other proposals of mine, ranging from a single shot against a particular line to a sweeping dismissal of a whole scene. Gurney was patient, courteous, making it clear that he was always ready to defer to my superior acquaintance with the scene, if only it weren't for these goddam interior obstacles. By the end of the week the only change I had actually been able to effect was in Act II, where it is necessary to get Lucasta and B. Kaghan off and leave the stage to Colby and Lady Elizabeth. Lucasta has said several times that she is famished; Kaghan agrees to take her out to dinner. The trouble is that it is only six o'clock and, as the script conceded, the kind of restaurant frequented by Lucasta would never start serving before eight.

"Eliot" solved the problem by having Lady Elizabeth suggest a Herbal Restaurant. "Most of its patrons dine at half past six," she prattles. "They have the most delicious salads!"

I sneered. "Something wrong with that?" asked Gurney.

"I should say so. They don't call them herbal restaurants. They call them *vegetarian* restaurants."

"Never herbal?"

"Never that I've heard."

He tried out the line, substituting "Vegetarian" for "Herbal" and counting the stresses on his fingers. Prosody wasn't a strong point with either of us. It didn't need all that fine an ear, though, to tell that three extra syllables threw the metre to its knees.

Gurney said, "There wouldn't be a salt beef house in the neighbourhood?"

"Not in that part of London, nor anywhere near."

"I guess not."

"There is one Vegan restaurant, somewhere round Leicester Square."

"Vegan? What's that?"

"Vegetarian-squared. Vegans don't eat eggs or milk, or milk products, either. Just salads and beans and nuts. They *are* nuts."

"And people have heard of them?"

"Yes", I lied wildly. I'd only heard of them by chance.

"Sounds like something out of *Amazing Stories* but it scans. Okay, 'Vegan' it is."

I felt unnaturally pleased.

The second week we did accomplish a few things. The third week it slowed right down again. A new line on the portable became an event. If I suggested anything at all Gurney would start thumbing through the now dog-eared script like a mediaeval schoolman trying to track down divine authority for the emendation.

"But we can do what we like", I'd wail.

"Can we?"—at his most irritatingly deliberate. "It's his play. Not ours."

"What about *Stately is the Night*?"

"*Straightway is the Night*, and that was

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different. It was nothing to begin with. If the actors forgot their lines that was an improvement. This is something else."

"What else?"

"I wish I knew. All I do know is that the more I look at this script the less I want to touch it. Between the damned clackety of the lines I keep hearing something. Did you ever listen to a blues singer like Bessie Smith or Ma Rainey—"

"But all the chatter, the small talk, the silly names—it's so *banal*."

"All right! Not even the blues, then, just an ordinary song that you hear Crosby or Sarah Vaughan or Dick Haymes singing. Nothing could be more banal. Yet sometimes something comes through that is bigger than the words, bigger than the music, bigger than the singer. What is it?"

Another time, and perhaps I should have seen the writing on the wall in it, he went back to the scene at the end when Colby decides to return to music. "He threw up the idea before because he found he hadn't got the talent to become the greatest organist in the world. Now he sees that doesn't matter. It never mattered. It is enough—it is everything—that he follows the craft he truly feels drawn to. Never mind if he doesn't get to play in Westminster Abbey. To do is more important than to do well, in your language. Doing it is better than making it, in ours. Who would want to monkey with that?"

IT CAME TO A HEAD when neither of us could have been expecting it. In my spare time I was also theatre critic for the paper, especially if there was a West End production passing through—or better still, starting off—on its try-out tour. This time it was *The Devil's General*, Carl Zuckmayer's play about a hell-raising Luftwaffe type, with Trevor Howard in the part. I took Gurney along and of course he'd met Zuckmayer when Zuckmayer was in Hollywood and knew the key to the plot, namely that it was based on the real-life stunt flier and World War I ace Ernst Udet.

All of which was interesting and helpful. The trouble was he also kept up a running criticism of the construction of the play, its direction and each performance. By the time I came to write the notice I was so laden with expertise I was beyond sorting out the six short paragraphs they liked for the Late Edinburgh Edition. The chief sub. had to start shouting before I could put down something, anything. Lying sleepless and exhausted afterwards I knew it was a good play, a strong play, a play I had enjoyed. Only Gurney had destroyed it for me but Gurney couldn't see the wood for the trees. If we could get *The Confidential Clerk* or rather, *The Personal Assistant*, half as workmanlike we might at last be earning our pay. If Gurney wouldn't go along with that, then it was time for mutiny on the T. S. Eliot.

I stayed in bed next morning until it was time to go to the office for the 1 p.m. shift. There were two messages to ring Gurney. He wanted to take me up, in a friendly fashion, on a point in the review of *The Devil's General* that had finally appeared.

"You see, Carl never did quite figure out what to do with that countess, or whatever—"

"At least he finished the bloody play. At least he's seen it produced. At least he didn't take his name off it." Unforgivably, I hurled back at him his own defence of our inept Eliot: "At least it's *his*."

There was a moment's silence at the other end, then: "Funny you should say that, Phil-lup. When can you come round?"

"It depends on—"

"Come as soon as you can."

When I arrived at the hotel Gurney's bags were packed and ready to be collected by the porter. Gurney was sitting at the little table with the usual litter of coffee cups but the morning's stack of newspapers still unopened. He was working fast with a gum eraser and a marking pen. "What are you doing?" I asked. He looked up briefly. "Taking out every alteration we ever put into the script," he said. "Save one."

I goggled at him.

"Don't you want to know *which* one?"

"Not especially."

"Well, it's yours. Vegan restaurant instead of herbal. When you see the show you can say, 'I wrote that. . . .' "

He blew a flurry of eraser dust off the last page of the script, weighed it in his hands for a moment, slid it into a heavy manila envelope and with the marking pen addressed it in giant formless capitals to HENRY

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SHERRECK; he never even mastered the spelling of that. "So long, Phil-lup." There was only friendliness in the brown bright eyes. "Do what's right for you. I'll let you know if and when you should look out for what's right for me."

SHEREK CAME UP to Edinburgh a couple of weeks later, bringing Eliot with him, whom he addressed as "Tom." Neither said anything about the re-write, or non re-write, but Eliot gave me one of his cigarettes which he said were made especially for him, extra mild, and were in a blue packet without any lettering. I should have kept it, I suppose. The first night of the play went off very well. Poor Margaret Leighton, who died not long ago, was beautiful as Lucasta. Denholm Elliott was Colby. An actor called Peter Jones who later became better known as a comic was B. Kaghan. When they got to the line about going out to dinner Isabel Jeans as Lady Elizabeth said 'Herbal' restaurant and not 'Vegan', because during the rehearsal period I sneaked round altering all the actors' copies, which is how T. S. Eliot's *The Confidential Clerk* came to be played exactly as he wrote it. I saw Gurney's name on an episode of *Wagon Train* on TV about seven years later.

Cowbells

I wake up to this tinkling.
Half-dreamed of and very distant,
the sound is as of stalactites melting,
swimming closer, never quite insistent,

till it stops short at the coarse
"Whoa!" of the cowherd as he checks
his cattle. The whole herd halts, fogged
and aimless. Adamant, it bottlenecks

the lane. It takes in the house-fronts
and the bricked-in saplings. Finding what little green
there is all make-believe, one of the cows
strays to the slag-heap and munches polythene.

In a minute they're all there. Bells clinking,
they dip into the refuse for their pick
of eggshells, newspaper. One cow won't budge.
She faces the wrong way—absentminded, or maybe she's just sick

of her colour, a dead aunt's frayed black velvet.
Her gaze transcends the crooked smiles
of the puddles next to her. The eyes glow
a moist amber. The buffalo and the other cows meanwhile

have made the best of it and are filing off.
Two trainee pyedogs trot before
them. The bells keep tinkling, tinkling.
The sound's still there. And then it isn't. And then you are not sure.

Adrian Husain

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John Grigg

Churchill, the Crippled Giant

His Last Two Years of Power

ON 23 June 1953 the British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, was giving a dinner party at 10 Downing Street for the Italian Prime Minister, Alcide de Gasperi. It was an important occasion, marking the reconciliation of two nations formerly friends but recently divided by ideology and war.

Churchill took such occasions seriously, conscious of their historic resonance. Before dressing for the dinner (full evening dress, with decorations) he pondered in his bath what to say in his speech. And the bath may have given him an idea, because he referred in the speech to what the ancient Italians had done for Britain—how the hot baths and central heating that they had brought in had disappeared, with their departure, for about 1500 years.

The speech was a great success. After the dinner and toasts the party left the dining room, and more guests arrived for the latter part of the evening. At about 11 p.m. Christopher Soames, Churchill's son-in-law and P.P.S., had a hunch that all was not well with the old man.

On closer inspection his suspicions were confirmed. Churchill looked very odd and his speech was slurred. Mary Soames was left sitting with her father while it was tactfully put around that the party was over. The Italians were quick to take the hint and others followed their example. Churchill could not rise from his seat even to say goodbye to Signora de Gasperi.

When the guests had left he was supported upstairs to bed. His doctor, Lord Moran, was telephoned but at first was out. By the time he was contacted Churchill was asleep, so it was arranged that he should come the following morning.

Moran arrived early on the 24th and could see at once that Churchill had had a stroke. It was not his first. He had had one in August 1949; but then he was merely Leader of the Opposition, Parliament was not sitting, and he was in a relatively secluded place, staying with Lord Beaverbrook in the South of France. News of the incident never got out and Churchill was able to recover at leisure.

BUT THIS TIME circumstances were very different. Churchill was Prime Minister, Parliament was sitting, and the Queen's Government had to be carried on. So far from being in a private residence abroad, he was in London and very much in the public eye.

The problem could hardly have been more acute, and it was further complicated by the fact that Churchill was not a passive element in it. Though his speech and movement were affected, his mental faculties were largely unimpaired. From the moment he realised what had happened to him he seems to have made up his mind to hang on at all costs—not only to life, but to power.

In spite of Moran's categorical instructions he got up and presided over the Cabinet before lunch on the 24th. (When he published his book thirteen years later Moran was still unaware of this act of supreme courage and insubordination.) Accounts of the Cabinet meeting differ slightly, but in any case it is astonishing that he managed it at all.

George Mallaby, who in Norman Brook's absence that day was acting as Secretary to the Cabinet, describes the scene thus:

> "There was an uncomfortable feeling in the room, a lifeless, heavy air, and the Prime Minister was still, silent and brooding. It was clear at once, as soon as he attempted to start the first item, that he was exhausted or ill. He could hardly shape his

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words to introduce the subject, he gave no lead and reached no conclusion. He fumbled ineffectually with his papers. His sense of touch had gone. He struggled on, scarcely comprehending what he was called upon to do. His colleagues sat in dismay, reluctant to speak at all, thinking it not worth while to express a point of view, wondering only in silent consternation what was the matter with the old man. Somehow he finished what was necessary. . . ."

Harold Macmillan, writing less than ten days after the event, gives a rather different picture:

"[Churchill] got through the Cabinet meeting without disclosing what had happened. (I certainly noticed nothing beyond the fact that he was very white. He spoke little, but quite distinctly. I remember that he called to me 'Harold, you might draw the blind down a little, will you?' I also noticed that he did not talk very much.)"

Other evidence confirms Macmillan's statement that Churchill's colleagues did not suspect the truth. But it was one thing to get through a meeting, seated, in his own house, quite another to walk to his place in the House of Commons and then answer questions. That, at least, he was dissuaded from attempting.

Indeed, he was prevailed upon to be driven out of London to his home at Chartwell. But on the way there he gave an explicit order that no one should be told of his condition.

BY THE 25th he was visibly worse and Moran told Jock Colville, his private secretary, that he would probably not survive the weekend. Colville's position was unenviable. Much as he disliked having to disobey his master, he felt obliged to act on his own initiative.

First, he wrote to three Press lords who were Churchill's personal friends—Bracken, Beaverbrook and Camrose—and to Field-Marshal Lord Alexander, who was Minister of Defence. A little later on the same day he wrote to R. A. Butler, Chancellor of the Exchequer. These letters were sent by despatch rider. He also communicated, perhaps by telephone, with the Queen's Private Secretary, Sir Alan Lascelles, and with Lord Salisbury, Lord President and Leader of the House of Lords.

A terrible dilemma faced this very small group of men. Should they or should they not come clean about Churchill's illness? If the public knew he had had a stroke he would almost certainly have to resign, whatever his chances of recovery. But if nothing was said and he were then to die within a few days (as Moran apparently expected), a heavy responsibility would rest on those who had tried to hush the matter up.

Something, in any case, would have to be said, because within a week Churchill was due to leave for Bermuda for a meeting with President Eisenhower and the French Prime Minister. On the 26th Moran prepared a communiqué which he and Russell Brain, the eminent neurologist, signed. It read:

"For a long time the Prime Minister has had no respite from his arduous duties and a disturbance of the cerebral circulation has developed, resulting in attacks of giddiness. We have therefore advised him to abandon his journey to Bermuda and to take at least a month's rest."

But this communiqué was never issued, because after the two doctors had left Chartwell, Butler and Salisbury (who were there that day) decided—in collusion with Churchill—that the reference to circulatory disturbance would give the show away. So the doctors' communiqué was further doctored by the politicians, and appeared in the following disingenuous terms:

"The Prime Minister has had no respite for a long time from his very arduous duties and is in need of a complete rest. We have therefore advised him to abandon his journey to Bermuda and to lighten his duties for at least a month."

This was a gamble which, if it had not come off, must have led to bitter recrimination between the doctors and the politicians, since both would have had much to answer for to the public. But the gamble did come off. After a further deterioration, during which his left side became almost completely paralysed, Churchill turned the corner and began slowly to regain his strength.

On 3 July Moran could record privately that his illness was no longer acute, but that he would never be quite the same again, because the clot in his artery had "cut off some of the blood which went to his brain and was the ultimate source of all his activities." But this information was withheld from the British people.

THE CABINET WAS TOLD about the stroke a week after it occurred, and some other Ministers may have heard about it over the next few weeks, though many did not. But Parliament as such was never informed, and when on 2 March 1955—repeat, 1955—Churchill himself blurted out the truth in the House of Commons, most MPs, Tories as well as Opposition, were staggered by the news.

Meanwhile, some weeks after the event, Churchill's illness had been correctly reported in the United States, France and other foreign countries, and at least one British newspaper—

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the *Daily Mirror*—referred to these reports. But the British Press as a whole either never knew what had happened, or was effectively muzzled.

Bracken and Camrose strongly favoured the policy of suppression; and Beaverbrook, though he soon began to recommend a more candid policy, would not practise it himself without authorisation. In 1953, as in 1949, his friendship for Churchill overrode his journalistic instincts.

IN FEW OTHER DEMOCRATIC COUNTRIES would it have been possible for the nation's chief executive to be so afflicted without the essential facts being at once communicated to the public. When three years later President Eisenhower had a coronary, every detail of his condition was made known to the American people as a matter of course.

If Churchill had died in mid-1953, or if—the facts of his illness being known—he had been forced to resign, who would have succeeded him? The question is of extraordinary interest, because the circumstances were so extraordinary.

There is often no obvious heir to a Prime Minister, but Churchill's heir apparent was Anthony Eden. His right to the succession had been almost universally recognised since the war years, and in 1952 he had seemed to give his claim an almost dynastic legitimacy by marrying into the Churchill family. (Actually Clarissa Eden, though close in blood, was in other respects not at all close to Winston Churchill, relations between uncle and niece having been distinctly cool for some years past.)

In the normal way those who knew about Churchill's stroke would have had no doubt what would happen in the event of its proving fatal. Quite simply, Eden would have entered into his inheritance. But in June 1953 that was out of the question, because Eden himself was then a major invalid.

Daily Mail

In April his gall bladder had been removed, but the operation was not a total success and a second was performed, which in turn resulted in complications. During his absence Churchill took over the Foreign Office; and the additional burden of work, coinciding with the Coronation and a Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference, may have helped to precipitate his stroke.

While Churchill was hovering between life and death at Chartwell, Eden was undergoing a third operation in Boston, Mass. and his recovery, anyway problematical, was bound to be slow. If the Premiership had become vacant, there would have been a very strong feeling in the Cabinet, in the Tory Party, and in the country that Eden should not be robbed of his reversionary right through temporary incapacity.

Among Ministers not on the sick list the only serious candidate was R. A. Butler. He was acting head of the Government and as Chancellor his prestige was at its highest point, his 1953 Budget having been outstandingly popular. But his colleagues had reservations about him, partly because he was so young (only 51).

Harold Macmillan was hardly in the running, because he had held none of the "great" offices and, as Minister of Housing, had not yet built the mystic number of 300,000 houses in a year. (This triumph was announced later in 1953.) So what would have happened?

An unprecedented course would have been adopted. The Queen would have used her prerogative to appoint an acting Prime Minister, who would have taken office on the clear understanding that he would relinquish it if and when Eden returned. The person secretly designated for this somewhat invidious role was Lord Salisbury.

As a peer he was virtually disqualified from becoming Prime Minister on any other terms; and as an old friend and associate of Eden's he

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could have been relied upon to make way for him at the earliest opportunity. Salisbury was much respected in the Party, and the Queen's choice of him as a stop-gap would have been not only accepted but applauded. (In those days there was, of course, no procedure for electing a Tory leader.)

As it was, Churchill survived; the Press was fixed; and the problem of finding an immediate temporary replacement for him did not arise. But Salisbury did become acting Foreign Secretary after Churchill's collapse.

EDEN'S LONG CONVALESCENCE was a godsend to Churchill, because it gave him a ready-made excuse for staying on as a non-playing captain at least until the autumn. For three months he did the minimum of work, but played a lot of bezique and read *Phineas Finn*, *The Prime Minister*, *The Duke's Children*, *Jane Eyre*, *Wuthering Heights* and *Candide*—all apparently for the first time.

On 24 July he moved from Chartwell to Chequers, to give the servants at Chartwell a rest. At this time he was still dragging his left leg, speaking rather thickly and prone to uncontrollable tearfulness. But in other respects his progress was remarkable. His will-power was concentrated upon the task of making himself fit to give the traditional leader's speech at the end of the Party Conference in October.

As a preliminary show of strength he presided at a Cabinet meeting on 18 August, and at another a few days later. His colleagues were amazed at the extent of his recovery. Then he returned to Chequers until the second week of September. He made his first public appearance since the stroke when, on 11 September, he accompanied the Queen to the St Leger and afterwards travelled north with her on the royal train to Balmoral. On 17 September he left for the South of France where he stayed at Beaverbrook's villa—in spite of its ominous associations—until 1 October.

TEN DAYS LATER he faced his crucial test at the Party Conference at Margate, and emerged from it with flying colours. As one of the audience I, for one, had no idea that anything was significantly wrong with him. He seemed (as he was) an old man, but a very brilliant and commanding old man. His reply to the vote of thanks, delivered without a note, was even more effective than his main speech.

Eden, too, had made a spectacular comeback at Margate, and had been greeted with rapture by the party faithful. Churchill, therefore, had to find another excuse for staying on; and he fell back upon one that he had been using before his stroke—that he had a unique service to render in trying to bring the Cold War to an end.

This was to be his constant theme throughout 1954. Various dates were set for his retirement, but he was only playing for time. First he intimated that he would go when the Queen returned from her Commonwealth tour in the Spring. But she returned, and he did not go.

Next he hinted that he was staying only until the end of the session. But the session ended, and he carried on. Finally he told Eden in writing that he would retire in September. But when September came he made no move.

He had re-established himself in the House of Commons and, with occasional lapses, maintained his hold there to the end. Even at Question Time he showed his old mastery, in spite of the physical strain of rising repeatedly to answer supplementaries.

In the Cabinet he performed superbly, delighting the younger members with his courtesy and style. He had first sat in a Cabinet in 1908, fourteen years before Lord Swinton, the next senior to him in Cabinet service, and before most of his colleagues had left school. Only Gladstone or Palmerston could boast a longer innings at the top level in politics.

AS AT EARLIER STAGES of his career, he expected others to conform to his ways. Since it was his habit to lunch late, morning Cabinets would drag on far beyond the time when most Ministers had lunch appointments. Very often he would embark upon a long monologue at about one o'clock and his colleagues would have to control their impatience as best they might until about a quarter-to-two.

Frequently he would appear comatose or distrait, but it was risky to count on his inattention. When one Minister had drawn a picture and passed it to his neighbour, who was whispering a comment on it, Churchill startled them by asking: "What is that picture, Minister of ———? And what were you saying to the Minister of ———? May we share your thoughts?" When informed that the picture was of a sailing ship, and that the comment was to the effect that it did not look very sea-worthy,

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he mumbled good-humouredly: "Oh, I see. Very practical."

If he was ever brutal to a Minister, it was almost invariably to one who could stand the treatment and was in need of it. Once a Minister of rather excessive self-confidence was asked to attend a Cabinet to expound a technical matter within his specialist field. Churchill began by congratulating him ceremoniously on his first attendance at a Cabinet, then invited him to speak. He spoke brashly, badly, boringly and for far too long. Most of those present listened to him with mounting irritation, but Churchill merely beamed. When the man had finished, he said: "Thank you. You have clearly mastered the first rule of politics."

The Minister smiled proudly, though a little puzzled.

"Do you know what that is?"

"No."

"When you don't understand a subject, be obscure."

His interest in home affairs was strictly limited, though his instincts remained on the whole what they had always been, liberal and humane. De-rationing of food and Butler's tax cuts in 1953 were much to his taste. But when in 1954 the economy showed signs of overheating (how pathetically slight by more recent standards!) he did not readily accept the need for fiscal restraint. Through a whole afternoon in the early spring of 1954, after a large lunch with champagne and brandy, he tried in vain to persuade Butler to cut direct and indirect taxation in his Budget. He wanted more done for what he called "the populace", and set particular store by the idea of taking twopence off a pint of beer. His imagination warmed to the mental picture of sturdy British workmen with their "foaming tankards."

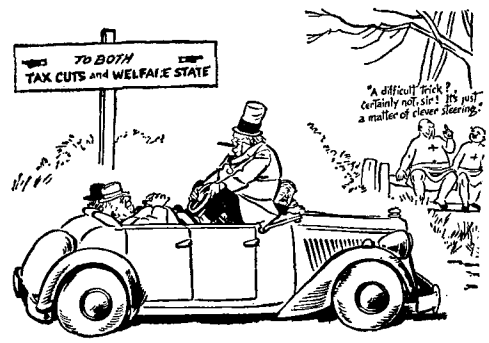
One of the most important domestic measures of his last Administration was the introduction of commercial television in 1954. But he had little to do with it. The issue did not stir him one way or the other, though his rather unjust resentment against the BBC in the 1930s prevented him from being an ardent supporter of the BBC monopoly as most of his colleagues were. He had no snobbish contempt for television as such. Indeed he had insisted, against the united opposition of the whole Cabinet and the Archbishop of Canterbury, that the Queen's Coronation should be televised.

One day, motoring up to London from Chartwell, he saw on the road a rabbit dying of myxomatosis, and got out of the car to look at it. The sight appalled him and as soon as he arrived in London he sent for the Minister of Agriculture. What could be done to check this cruel disease? The Minister had no desire to check it, but at Churchill's request altered an amendment to a Bill then before Parliament. The intervention was magnificent, but without effect. Even Churchill could do nothing to save the rabbits.

In any case his mind was very largely concerned with world affairs, and a Minister who wanted his support for a domestic programme was well-advised to present it to him in a global context. He was, for instance, no friend to public education; but when it was brought to his notice that the Russians were miles ahead of us in technical education he was horrified and demanded at once that we should provide for it on a scale that would be "not only comparable, but superior." On the other hand, when he heard that a 15-year-old boy had assaulted one of the teachers at a school near Chartwell he talked half-seriously of lowering the school-leaving age.

It was unfortunate that the Minister in whose departmental sphere he meddled most was the very man whom he was keeping waiting for the succession—Anthony Eden. During 1953–5 there were two highly emotive issues on which they were at loggerheads: withdrawal from Egypt, and summit approaches to the Russians.

Churchill was an old-fashioned Imperialist and when Eden proposed that we should withdraw our large garrison from the Suez Canal Zone—for which British treaty rights would soon be expiring, anyway—he found Churchill strongly opposed to the idea. This was awkward, because Churchill's views were shared by some Tory



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MPs and by many Tory workers in the country.

They were not, however, widely shared in the Cabinet, among whose members only two—Maxwell Fyfe and Monckton—supported the Churchill line. Eventually the old man gave way, saving his face with the bogus argument that the Hydrogen Bomb had rendered military bases obsolete.

The question of Summitry was perhaps the more serious bone of contention. Churchill yearned for the world-sharing conferences at which he and Roosevelt and Stalin had met to decide the fate of mankind. He was also very sensitive to the charge that he was a war-monger; and he wanted to prove, before leaving the political stage, that he could make peace as well as war. This worthy motive was reinforced by a very human, if slightly less worthy, desire to remain in office.

Churchill was convinced that if he could talk personally to Malenkov (who seemed to have become the man in control after Stalin's death in March 1953) they might be able to reach an understanding that would put an end to the ghastly peril and waste of the Cold War. He also believed that he could revive, with Eisenhower, the supposed intimacy of the War-time special relationship between Britain and the USA.

ANTHONY EDEN was rightly sceptical of both these day-dreams. Without being any more sympathetic than Churchill to projects of European federal union involving Britain, he was sure that no useful business could be done with the Russians unless and until the solidarity of Western Europe was manifest, politically and militarily. He was afraid—and with good reason—that premature approaches to the Soviet Union might undermine the confidence of Britain's partners in Europe.

As it turned out, Malenkov was not, in any case, the strong man Churchill understandably assumed him to be. But before Malenkov's fall in early 1955 Churchill had strained his relations with Eden to the limit by repeated attempts to arrange a meeting with the Russian leader. He even carried on separate negotiations with the Soviet Ambassador, Malik, behind the Foreign Secretary's back—exactly what Neville Chamberlain had done with Grandi, the Italian Ambassador, in 1938, driving Eden to resignation.

On one occasion, when Churchill was planning to invite Malik to lunch at Chartwell, Mrs Churchill insisted that Mrs Malik should also be invited. This annoyed Churchill, because he wanted a purely business meeting; and he sent an emissary to explain his wishes diplomatically to Malik. As the emissary was leaving the Soviet Embassy in Kensington Palace Gardens he confirmed the arrangement with the Ambassador. "And what about Madame Malik?" he asked. "Madame Malik will be ill on the date in question", was Malik's dead-pan reply.

CHURCHILL'S ATTEMPT to resurrect the Anglo-American special relationship was no more successful than his would-be flirtation with the Russians. The postponed Bermuda conference took place in December 1953; and it provided an opportunity for hours of private talk between Churchill and Ike, outside the Three-Power sessions in which the French took part. Churchill also went to Washington in June 1954 for bilateral talks. But very little was achieved, and it was obvious to the more clear-sighted British officials that American goodwill towards Churchill personally—which was immense—had a negligible spin-off of political advantage to Britain. To some extent it worked the other way, because Americans were so determined not to allow their judgments to be swayed by his personality.

Nearly everything that was achieved in foreign affairs during Churchill's last Government was achieved by Eden, either in spite of the Prime Minister or, at least, independently of him. As well as the Suez agreement, Eden was responsible for the Indo-China settlement, the Trieste settlement, and the establishment of W.E.U. He has also been credited with settling the oil dispute between Britain and Iran, though in that particular case Churchill deserves a large share of the credit

THE OIL DISPUTE would probably never have been settled unless Mossadek—the cause of it—had been driven from power. Indeed it is quite possible that Iran would now be a Communist State if Mossadek's fall had not been brought about, as it was, by a combination of inside resistance and help from outside. In mobilising the latter Churchill played a key part.

British agents had reported to Eden in 1952 that there were elements in Iran ready to bring Mossadek down granted the necessary encouragement, including cash, from Britain. The elements concerned were as pro-British as they were anti-Mossadek. But Eden would not sanction the coup. He fended the project off by

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saying that it could not, in any case, be undertaken without American support.

So the British conspirators went to the CIA and won that organisation's support for the plan. But Eden was still unwilling to give it his approval; and the Americans did not like to activate it on their own, since Iran was regarded as a British sphere of influence. There matters rested when Eden fell ill in April 1953 and Churchill assumed temporary control of the Foreign Office.

During the brief period before his stroke he became aware of the plan to overthrow Mossadek and gave it his blessing. It was carried out by the CIA in August, using all the contacts supplied by the plan's British originators. The British themselves could not carry it out, because they had meanwhile been expelled from Iran. The CIA was so pleased with its success that the following year it staged a similar coup in Guatamala; and in the years ahead it undertook many exercises in the same genre, not all of them equally successful.

CHURCHILL'S ATTITUDE towards Eden was strangely ambivalent. While admiring the younger man's qualities he doubted his capacity for leadership. At the same time he recognised—and this was the decisive consideration—that Eden's standing in the Tory Party was even stronger than his own and that the Party would be outraged if Eden were not his successor.

Relations between the two men became so edgy that their colleagues were often embarrassed. There were painful scenes in Cabinet. During the summer of 1954 Harold Macmillan had the courage to tell Churchill that he ought to go. In September Lord Woolton reported an appreciation by Tory agents in the country that unless there was a new Prime Minister the Party would lose the next election.

Ministers in the know were afraid that Churchill might take some drastic, disastrous step that would split the Party from top to bottom. He might, for instance, resign on the issue of Summit talks with the Russians. He threatened to do so on more than one occasion.

AT THE END OF NOVEMBER his 80th birthday was celebrated amid general euphoria. The Graham Sutherland portrait was presented to him in Westminster Hall, but shortly afterwards two guests at his private birthday party in Downing Street found it upside down in a housemaid's cupboard. Its subsequent history is unknown.

Still he did not resign. As an alternative to complete retirement he canvassed the possibility of remaining as Lord President in an Eden Administration. But this would never have worked, and Eden was right to give the suggestion no countenance.

At last he knew that the game was up. The Party wanted a May election and it was essential that his successor should be installed, at the very latest, a month beforehand. Besides, he could see that his hopes of a summit meeting were completely doomed for the indefinite future.

On 2 March 1955 he was stung by Aneurin Bevan into an off-the-cuff apologia in the House of Commons, which contained the first official admission of his stroke:

> "It is quite true that I would have liked to see a top-level conference with the three Powers, and I would have liked to see it shortly after Mr Malenkov took power—as I said at the time—to see 'Is there a new look?'. . . . I prepared in every way to go over to see the President. However, I was struck down by a very sudden illness which paralysed me completely, physically. That is why I had to put it all off."

As he referred to his paralysis he stroked his left arm, side and leg (according to Macmillan) "with a most moving gesture"; and "the House sat in absolute silence." No wonder, because most MPs were hearing for the first time that the Prime Minister had nearly died when all that they and the public had been told was that he needed a bit of a rest.

On 4 April, following a precedent set by Stanley Baldwin before his resignation—and followed again, more recently, by Harold Wilson—he entertained the Queen to dinner at 10 Downing Street. Next day he held his last Cabinet meeting, which he concluded on a bantering, unemotional note.

"Sir Norman Brook, with his usual forethought, has arranged a photographer for us upstairs. Let's go there now. After all, we're not a bad-looking lot."

Those were his last words in Cabinet.

The same evening—5 April 1955—he went to Buckingham Palace to tender his resignation. Should he have gone many months sooner? The answer is, very definitely yes.

AFTER HIS STROKE Winston Churchill was still a giant, but a crippled giant. Old age had anyway deprived him of much of his former dynamism, but the stroke—even when he

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had recovered from its immediate effects—further diminished his powers.

He was, moreover, a crippled giant in a more fundamental sense. His genius and fame were out of all proportion to the power that he was able to exert as head of a British party government in the post-War world. Not only did he fail to grasp this fact himself; he also made it more difficult than it might otherwise have been for his countrymen to grasp the new realities of power. They saw that he was a giant and this encouraged them to feel that Britain was still gigantic. Few of them saw clearly that he *and* Britain were crippled.

Even if this country on its own had been in the same power league as the United States and the Soviet Union, it was too late in 1953 to intimidate the Russians, who already had the big bombs, and far too early to interest them in the sort of *détente* that has recently become fashionable (though also, perhaps, illusory). Churchill made several fine speeches about the need for peaceful co-existence in the nuclear age, but he could have made them just as well without being in office. Either way, their practical effect could only be very slight.

All things considered it would have been far better if he had resigned after the Margate Conference in the autumn of 1953. This would certainly have been fairer to Eden and therefore, since he was the inevitable successor, fairer to Britain. To a man of his highly-strung temperament Churchill's rear-guard action of 1953–5 was an almost intolerable strain. It is likely that Eden would, in any case, have proved unfit for the Premiership; but the way he was kept waiting for the job helped to ensure that he would make a hash of it.

This is particularly true in one vital respect. Eden's fight with Churchill over withdrawal from the Suez Canal base made him feel—no doubt illogically—that Nasser was under a special obligation to him. Consequently, when Nasser nationalised the Suez Canal Company in 1956, Eden over-reacted with all the fury of "a woman scorned." There is thus a direct connection between Churchill's refusal to bow out in 1953 and the most humiliating catastrophe of British history since the Second World War.

The Assassin

I am invisible.
I carry a shapeless bag,
a plain brown parcel.

In my drab raincoat
you don't see me
in your shopping centres.

I have a room
across the street
from your house.

I am on the roof
overlooking your office.
I sit in your pub.

The cross of my sights
caresses your forehead,
centres between your eyes.

I see
the thin sweat
filming your skin.

I am in your city.
My eye is on you.
I watch you

throw the salt
and round your lighted room
nightly hang out garlic.

Christopher Wiseman

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Richard Lowenthal

Can Communism Offer an Alternative World Order?

Some Lessons of 20th-Century Politics

WHEN Lenin's Bolshevik party seized power in Russia in November 1917 and succeeded in maintaining it beyond the civil war, and when this ruling party founded the Communist International in March 1919, a new political and ideological force had entered world history.

The explosive power of that force stemmed from the fusion of two elements of different cultural origin. On the one side, there was the Western secular religion of Marxism with its promise that the Western ideal of the emancipation of the rational individual in a classless society, free from exploitation, coercion, and war, would be fulfilled by the revolution of the industrial proletariat in the advanced industrial countries; on the other, the Russian 19th-century faith in revolution by centralised, conspiratorial organisation and social transformation by dictatorial state power, based on the experience of the primacy of the state over society in Russian history—and adopted by Lenin as a prescription for putting his backward homeland in the van of the movement towards world-wide socialism.

Lenin accomplished the fusion of these elements by replacing, as early as 1902, the Marxian concept of a democratic party evolving with the experience of the working class by his own concept of a centralised "vanguard party", created as the instrument of the "scientific" insight and will to power of its leader; and by subsequently interpreting the Marxian slogan of the "dictatorship of the proletariat"—conceived by its author as the absolute but transitional power exercised by the working majority of a nation—as the lasting institutional monopoly of power of that vanguard party, speaking in the name of the proletariat but acting independently of its actual will. In thus transforming the Marxian idea of the self-emancipation of the working majority of an advanced industrial country into an organisational device for modernising a backward society by the use of dictatorial state power, Lenin decisively weakened the Marxian link between the prospects of revolution and the maturity of "objective" economic and social conditions. He created a new "Leninist" version of Marxism cut from its Western roots and deeply impregnated with crucial non-Western features from the Russian tradition.

THE HISTORY AND ACHIEVEMENTS of Leninist communism in the six decades that have passed since the October Revolution reflect the contradictions of its origin.

Communism has utterly failed to approach the fulfilment of the Marxian vision of a society without exploitation, coercion, or war. Instead, it has created the most complete and durable forms of absolute "totalitarian" rule known to modern man, the most uncontrolled type of privileged bureaucratic caste, and new kinds of violent "ideological" conflict between communist-ruled nations. It has utterly failed as a revolutionary force in the West, achieving no revolution in any advanced industrial country—and the only remaining communist mass parties in such countries (Italy, France and Japan) have drawn the lessons of that failure to the point of solemnly abandoning Leninist principles.

But it has transformed backward Russia into a modern superpower and more backward China into a great regional power. It has in the process provided two different models for the modernisation of a non-Western, underdeveloped country by non-Western methods and without its cultural Westernisation. Moreover, by maintaining their *ideological* hostility towards the

IN A *forthcoming* ENCOUNTER *Professor Richard Lowenthal, a regular* ENCOUNTER *contributor, will deal with the question of the so-called Decline of the West.*

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"imperialists" (that is, the advanced non-Communist powers) undiluted throughout all the vicissitudes of changing *diplomatic* constellations, the new Communist powers have created a fundamentally divided world. The Communist influence on the new Third World of ex-colonial countries, while converting few of them positively to the system and doctrine of communism, has nevertheless erected an increasingly effective negative barrier against the spread of Western development models and Western values among the under-developed nations.

Finally, the effectiveness of Communism in dividing the world and limiting Western influence in areas of non-Western cultural tradition is not matched by any constructive contribution to a new international order. On the contrary, the Communist fixation on the primacy of the Nation-State as the organ of social transformation has prevented the preservation of a single centre of ideological authority after the rise of a plurality of Communist states. It has indeed led to bitter national conflicts and ideological divergencies among Communist powers, resulting in the pluralistic disintegration of the world Communist movement.

The Achievements in Russia

LET US BEGIN WITH the great transforming achievements of Communist rule in Russia and China.

The more remote the traditional social and institutional structures and cultural values of a country are from those of traditional, pre-modern Western societies, the less likely is that country to bring forth that process of spontaneous, dynamic social change that created the modern West. The more likely then, that its successful modernisation will depend on central political direction of forced accumulation and investment and central political control of the re-education of the masses to the disciplined habits of industrial work. In 19th-century Japan, which after all displayed a number of important similarities with the feudal past of the West, an Imperial Revolution from above was still necessary to start the nation on its astonishing road to modernisation. In Russia, lacking the Western traditions of independent burgher cities and an independent nobility, of estates limiting the power of the ruler, of the separation of secular and spiritual power, of religious plurality and rational debate, the major steps towards modernisation had again and again depended on the initiative of autocratic rulers acting from the need to compete with the military strength of more modern neighbours. The results, while in part remarkable in the last quarter-century before the First World War, were quite insufficient to enable the country to stand that test.

Any kind of Russian revolution that followed the collapse of 1917 would have had to do away with the privileges of the land-owning nobility and to attack the sloth of the illiterate rural masses. But the Bolshevik party dictatorship, as established by Lenin and carried on by Stalin, created a machinery for forced industrialisation, with priority given to heavy industry and a consequent restriction of mass consumption, and for a simultaneous forced re-education of the masses not only to literacy and elementary technical knowledge, but also to disciplined labour performance and political compliance. Such Western values as the duty of work and the rationality of economic man, as expressed in highly differentiated material incentives, were inculcated far more effectively and thoroughly than ever before. Other Western values such as the rights of the individual and the importance of voluntary association were totally rejected—the latter most strikingly in Stalin's decision for forced collectivisation, but more fundamentally by the general totalitarian monopoly of organisation.

BY COMBINING rapid industrialisation with repeated "revolutions from above"—first the "destruction of the kulaks as a class", then the mass liquidation of cadres in the course of Stalin's blood purge of the 1930s—a totally new class structure was created, with a privileged bureaucracy at the top and the "reserve army" of state slaves in the labour camps at the bottom.

The régime widened the limits of political power beyond all earlier imaginings; but it never even attempted to achieve the Marxian utopia of a classless society. The blood purge, undertaken when Stalin feared a new challenge to his control of the Party after the country had come through the crisis of collectivisation, also established his personal despotism over the institutions of Party rule. But the Soviet Union survived without a formal change in the legitimation of the régime not only those horrors, but also the terrible losses and devastation of Hitler's invasion and, finally, the shock of "de-Stalinisation"—

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of the restoration of institutional rule after the despot's death. As the country had by then achieved a considerable, if uneven, degree of industrial maturity, Stalin's successors felt able to introduce a number of major reforms, renouncing slave labour as a major component of the economy and substantially, if still insufficiently, improving the incomes of the worker and peasant masses over the last two decades. Since the 1960s, they have also abandoned the attempt to impose new social transformations by revolution from above and have in fact settled down to a basically conservative policy of preserving the rule of the bureaucratic oligarchy by providing economic growth, slowly improving living standards, and a steady increase in national power.

Of the balance sheet, the late John Strachey has said, "the means have been terrible, the results commonplace."[1] That is, indeed, largely true for the economic and social spheres. But the political stability of a post-revolutionary régime through all those upheavals can hardly be called commonplace. The rise of the Soviet Union to the status of a nuclear global power in a world fundamentally divided not only by power rivalry but by the Communist ideological doctrine certainly cannot.

Modernising China

IN CHINA the task of modernisation was far more daunting than in Russia, and its achievement by Western methods far more hopeless (as Sun Yat-sen had recognised after his early failures). Hence the régime of the nationalist Kuomintang in the 1920s and 1930s aimed at the unification of China by war, followed by its modernisation through an "educational" period of single-party rule. But the Kuomintang never succeeded completely in unifying China and never even got a chance to start seriously on its modernisation programme—in part because of its internal divisions and weaknesses, in part because of the exploitation of those divisions and weaknesses by the creation of Communist guerrilla areas, and finally because of the Japanese invasion. That the Chinese Communists survived decades of civil war and war—and finally defeated the Kuomintang—was due to their effective use of both the agrarian and nationalist issues and to a highly original strategy of protracted guerrilla warfare. That they succeeded in establishing and preserving Chinese unity, and restoring and completing Chinese independence testifies both to the inspiring strength of the national element in their ideology, and to their remarkable talent for administrative organisation.

China's economic modernisation has not been equally successful—not only because of the low starting level, but also because of the immense population pressure and the cultural resistance of many Chinese Communists to "Western" ideas of economic rationality. Following a remarkably fast recovery from the devastations of war and civil war, industrialisation and collectivisation were first undertaken on the Stalinist model (though Chinese collectivisation appears to have been less violent and to have caused less lasting damage). But by 1957 it became obvious that it was impossible to create new industrial plants in the towns fast enough to cope with the massive influx of labour from the countryside, and a search for alternatives to the Stalinist model of industrialisation began.

One development has been the gradual abandonment of the exclusive priority for heavy industry, leading to greater emphasis on the improvement of agriculture and the growth of light industry, and therefore to improvements in the standard of living, at a much earlier stage than in Russia. But there were also attempts to force a "Great Leap Forward" by a new agricultural upheaval—the creation of "People's Communes"—which included the largely unsuccessful effort to build masses of primitive industrial plants in the countryside, as well as utopian experiments to achieve "Communist" equality by reducing the main part of peasants' incomes to equal rations; and it was accompanied by the subordination of industrial managers and technicians to local party committees. After these experiments had been increasingly "corrected" because of their disastrous results, the campaign against differential incentive wages as "capitalist" and against managerial authority was largely resumed during the Cultural Revolution in 1966–8. This was accompanied by a virtual closing down of institutions of higher education, and was followed after their reopening by renewed attacks on "academic" standards in the name of pure faith.

In fact, the continuing controversy between the advocates of economic rationality and education of expert cadres on one side, and those who favoured ideological fundamentalism, reliance on

[1] See, on this point, his two ENCOUNTER pamphlets: "The Great Awakening" (1961) and "The Challenge of Democracy" (1963).

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moral incentives and distrust of experts on the other, reflects a profound split in the Chinese Communist leadership; and it has been closely linked with a struggle that concerned first Mao's personal authority and now increasingly his succession. The Cultural Revolution was organised by Mao, and supported by the "fundamentalists", as a means to establish his personal rule above the—for a time virtually paralysed—institutions of party rule with the help of the army. Its end was brought about by increasing pressure from the army which feared the spreading chaos. Subsequent developments, from the rise and fall of Lin Piao to the events following the death of Mao, have been dominated by the mechanics of coup and countercoup, without so far indicating a return to institutional stability based on procedural consensus.

Yet during this same political "time of troubles", the Chinese Communists have succeeded, with the Maoist ideology as their banner, in establishing their country as a fully independent power—a power with some nuclear and massive conventional strength which is now in a position to defend its independence effectively against the perceived threat from the Soviet Union; to preserve its ideological hostility to the West despite a partial normalisation of relations; and to take its place on the international stage as a champion of Third World criticism of both superpowers.

That established position of power, despite the lack of internal stability and uneven economic progress, is the measure of the success of the Chinese Communists in less than three decades.

Failure in the West

THE CREATION OF an international movement dominated by Leninist principles of strategy and organisation was the result of the First World War, of Lenin's explanation of its senseless bloodshed as the necessary outcome of the imperialist stage of capitalism, and of Lenin's victory in Russia. It was the war and the post-War political and economic crisis that caused above all the growth and radicalisation of the revolutionary wing of the European workers' movement, and the success of the Bolsheviks in maintaining power (despite civil war and intervention) caused the hopes of the radicalised movements to be focused on the new Soviet state.

When the revolutionary post-War wave in Europe began to ebb away without the lasting victory of any revolutionary socialist movement outside Russia, Lenin concluded that the young European Communist parties had to learn from the Bolsheviks how to win. At the second Comintern congress (in the summer of 1920) the Leninist model of strategy and organisation was imposed on all Communist parties as a condition of membership. In the following years party after party was split, and split repeatedly, to ensure its complete "Bolshevisation." One result of this was that the Communist following in Europe was greatly reduced. The majority of a number of great socialist parties had voted for joining the Comintern in 1920, but four years later, at Lenin's death, the Communists were a minority of organised labour everywhere except in a few Balkan countries. Another result was that the spontaneous split of the socialist movement caused by the First World War was replaced by a permanent split on different lines—between the supporters of democracy and of Party dictatorship.

However, the new "Bolshevised" Communist parties proved uniformly unsuccessful. Dependence on ill-informed and frequently changing directives from outside prevented their leaders from winning confidence and establishing authority among the working masses of their own countries. This effect was exacerbated when the factional struggle for Lenin's succession in Russia spread to the non-Soviet Communist parties and led to frequent purges of their leaders for having backed one of Stalin's rivals.

But there was also an inherent, doctrinaire reason for the series of defeats the Communists suffered in democratic countries. The Communists were then tied to the model of the creation of soviets, which had sprung up in a country without democratic mass organisations, and of an armed insurrection against the "bourgeois state." But at times of crisis the masses in the Western democracies were inclined to look to the state for help rather than to rise against it. That was demonstrated when the worst economic crisis in the history of capitalism, that of 1929–32, could not be exploited for a Communist revolution anywhere. Instead in Germany, the advanced industrial country most severely hit by the crisis with one-third of its labour force unemployed in 1932, the Communist concentration on the struggle against Social Democracy as the "main enemy" contributed to the rise of Hitler's National Socialist dictatorship.

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THE BELATED RECOGNITION that Hitler's régime was a direct threat to the survival of the Soviet Union led Stalin by the summer of 1934 to order a radical change in Communist strategy, parallel to the about-face in Soviet diplomacy. As in Soviet foreign policy, the defence of democracy against the fascist danger now became the central slogan of the Communists in the West.

The "Popular Front" strategy enabled the Communists to gain a new mass following in several European countries and to influence the policy of some governments (notably in France from outside and in Spain from inside). But the strict subordination of Communist policy to all changes in Soviet diplomatic tactics as well as the use of Soviet secret police methods behind the front in the Spanish civil war finally isolated the Communists again. When, after the signing of the Stalin-Hitler pact, the Communists turned round once more to justify it and to condemn resistance to Hitler's attack on Poland as an "imperialist war", their influence in the West reached an all-time low.

ONLY HITLER'S ATTACK on the Soviet Union gave the Communists in the West a second chance to redeem their total failure in the inter-war period. Their adoption of an active and often heroic role in the underground resistance movements in the countries occupied by the Axis powers, aided by Moscow's demonstrative dissolution of the Comintern in the spring of 1943, gained them a new following, above all among the younger generation.

At the end of the War they were included in all the national governments which emerged after the liberation of the occupied countries—not only those in Soviet-occupied Eastern Europe but also those in Western Europe which had been liberated by British and American forces. In France they became for a time the strongest party; in Italy permanently the second strongest; and even in such stable democratic countries as Norway, Denmark and Holland, their influence was for a time substantial. Yet their presence in the West European governments really depended on the parallel presence of genuine non-Communist parties in the Eastern European governments: Stalin had authorised a period of coalition governments in some of those "people's democracies" in the hope that their example would facilitate what later—under Khrushchev—came to be called the "peaceful road" to power in the West, after the expected early withdrawal of American and British forces.

But as the Cold War came to dominate the scene, and the non-Communist parties were persecuted and finally hounded out of existence in more and more East European countries, Communist participation in government became untenable in the West. The turning point in the influence of the West European parties on the masses was the Marshall Plan—the Soviet refusal to permit the participation of any East European countries in the plan; the renewed tightening of international Communist discipline by the creation of the Communist Information Bureau; and the directive of that Cominform that the West European Communists (notably the strong French and Italian Communist parties) should try to wreck that effort for cooperative post-War reconstruction by political mass strikes. Within a short time, the West European Communists came to appear to the majority of their compatriots as the allies and tools of the enemy in the Cold War. As a result, they shrank to sectarian proportions in Britain, West Germany, and the smaller countries. In France and Italy their growth was arrested and their mass following became frozen in a kind of "counter-society"—self-contained and disciplined, but cut off from any chance of influence on the over-all development of the country. Even Khrushchev's public declaration of 1956 in favour of "a peaceful road to power" in the West made no difference, because for that road the Western Communists needed democratic allies—and they could not overcome their isolation while they remained tied to the Soviet model of single-party rule.

THE ROLE OF THESE ISOLATED Communist parties in a persistently non-revolutionary situation became increasingly absurd as Western Europe experienced a period of striking economic progress, improving living standards and social security, and successful if limited economic integration. The disclosures of Stalin's crimes and the repeated East European crises resolved only by Soviet military action—in East Germany in 1953, in Hungary in 1956, and in Czechoslovakia in 1968—undermined the faith in the Soviet Union and its bloc as models of a better "socialist" society.

As a result, the parties of Western Europe sought alternative routes to influence. The first to take tentative steps in this direction were the ably-led Italian Communists. Looking for a more

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active political role in the democratic process, they began to seek it by arguing that Russia and Eastern Europe embodied a form of socialism built on backward historical and cultural foundations that could not serve as a model for socialism in the industrially advanced democracies, and that socialism in the West must be achieved by democratic means and take democratic political forms in the Western, pluralistic sense of that term. These successive changes, adopted not in response to a switch of the "party line" from above but in prolonged and public inner-party discussion, amount by now to an abandonment of the Leninist principle of party dictatorship and party monopoly and of the Soviet model embodying that principle. They must be seen as the long-term effect of the integrative force of Western democracy on both the Communist leaders and a large number of their followers. One remarkable demonstration of that effect is the statement of Enrico Berlinguer that, so long as Europe is divided among antagonistic blocs, he sees a better chance for creating the type of socialist system he desires within the orbit of NATO than within that of the Warsaw Pact—largely because of the experience of Czechoslovakia in 1968.

It is notable that under Italian influence similar developments have taken place in recent years in the Communist party of Spain, and more independently in the French and Japanese parties. The change in the French party has been most reluctant, most suddenly imposed from above and, least complete, as the continued French Communist emphasis on an anti-European nationalist demagoguery shows. But the same pressures are also at work in the French party. The common factor is that, even in conditions brought on by the most severe capitalist Inflation/Recession crisis since the end of World War II, West European Communist parties have perceived no chance of a road to power *outside* the framework of Western democracy and no chance of becoming effective *within* that framework without abandoning the Leninist principles of the revolutionary overthrow of Western democratic institutions and the establishment of a dictatorial Single-Party régime.

Dividing the World

COMMUNISM, THEN, after temporarily weakening some of the Western democracies in the inter-War period, has been unable to triumph in any Western country from *within*. But it has become a major *external* threat to the West by its impact on the non-Western world.

This impact was still fairly limited during the first quarter-century after the October Revolution. Despite the Western intervention of the early years, which was far from the all-out effort as which it looms in Soviet legend, the supposed "Russian danger" did not then become the main preoccupation of Western statesmen or the main axis of world politics. Russia was still too backward, too weak, and too isolated. It is significant that after the rise of Hitler's régime there followed a period of three-cornered manoeuvring among the Soviet Union, Nazi Germany, and the other Western powers, in the course of which the groups favouring an anti-Soviet alliance were eventually defeated. In concluding the 1939 pact with Hitler, Stalin may be said to have contributed to the outbreak of the Second World War—rather more intentionally than he had contributed to Hitler's rise to power. But given the character of the Nazi régime, that war was inevitable anyway.

However, the situation became entirely different after Hitler's defeat. Russia, for all the terrible cost of Hitler's invasion, was one of the three main powers to survive the War with their statehood intact, and one of the two who survived it to be the major powers of the new era. Stalin deliberately took advantage of that situation to "impose his system as far as his armies marched." Eastern Europe up to the Elbe became Communist not by internal revolution, but as the Baltic states had become sovietised during the Stalin-Hitler pact—by incorporation into the Soviet sphere of power. The forcible subjection to Soviet Communist control of countries with Western traditions like Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and East Germany, none of whom have been able to escape from it despite repeated popular uprisings, was sufficient to create in the free Western nations the sense of a new threat to their own freedom that awakened a will to resistance first in Britain, then in the United States, and finally also in France.

The division of the advanced world into antagonistic political, economic, and ultimately military blocs was the result. In Asia, Russia was not equally successful in filling a part of the post-War power vacuum; but the victory of the Chinese Communists and their alliance with the Soviet Union added a tremendous potential, if not yet actual power, to the new "Communist

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bloc" in 1949–50. Finally, the breaking of the American nuclear monopoly and the eventual development of thermonuclear bombs by Russia gave the confrontation a new dimension, making the survival of a divided humanity dependent on a "balance of terror."

THAT BALANCE, BASED ON the recognition of the antagonists' common interest in survival, and the effective stabilisation of the European border between the blocs, did eventually combine to produce the limitations of the range and forms of the conflict known as Détente. They might indeed have led to an obsolescence of the power conflict itself but for the continued effectiveness of the conflict of ideological principles.

While in the West the ideological fervour aroused by the events of the early post-War period gradually declined, in the Soviet Union the Communist framework for perceiving the world was linked with the ideological principles legitimating the ruling institution, the Party. As the conduct of Khrushchev showed, a change of leadership made no difference to that ideological limit to peaceful coexistence. Moreover, the power rivalry and the ideological conflict had not remained confined to their early European focus. In the vast, underdeveloped areas of the world, conditions were far more favourable to revolutionary change in general and to anti-Western ideologies in particular than they were in the advanced democracies.

Communism had no decisive influence on the start of the historic dismantling of the old colonial empires that began soon after the war. It had become inevitable by that time, particularly after the War-time experience of the Asian and North African colonies. The need for the West European colonial powers to compete against Communist propaganda was at most an accelerating factor. In fact, the Stalinist dogma that colonial revolutions could only succeed under Communist leadership was so thoroughly refuted, both by the American withdrawal from the Philippines and Britain's peaceful release of the Indian sub-continent on one side, and by the violent liberation struggles under non-Communist leadership in Indonesia (and later Algeria) on the other, that official Communist doctrine at first denied for some years that those countries had become "really" independent. To this day, North Viet Nam is the only country to have emerged *from colonial rule* under Communist leadership.

BUT THIS IS NO ADEQUATE YARDSTICK for the effectiveness of Communist ideologies in the new Third World that arose *after* decolonisation.

By 1954 the Soviet and Chinese leaders corrected Stalin's error and, recognising the independence of the new states, began to compete with the West for influence on them. In 1955 the Chinese played a star role at the Bandung conference, persuading many of the new Asian leaders that the only danger to their newly-won independence was still Western imperialism. In 1956 Khrushchev proclaimed that the new states should form a "zone of peace" together with the "socialist camp", which was willing to respect their military neutrality so as to win their political sympathy. Ever since, the Communist powers—and the native Communist parties—have sought to win the maximum number of underdeveloped countries to a "non-capitalist road of development." Though after China, only Viet Nam and Cuba have become Communist-ruled, and only a small and unstable minority of Third-World countries has qualified for the "non-capitalist" label, yet the negative (to wit, anti-Western) impact of Communist ideology on the underdeveloped world has been great.

Isolating the West?

THAT IMPACT IS NOT purely a result of the attraction of the Leninist theory of imperialism for intellectuals of ex-colonial or "semi-colonial" countries.

It is also based on the real experience that unplanned investment in a free, Western-style market economy cannot produce effective development under non-Western structural and cultural conditions; that central investment planning is indispensable to solve the economic problems of those countries; and that Western-type pluralistic democracy, with freedom of action for organised interest groups, makes it very difficult to carry through a consistent development policy in conditions of poverty. These truths have, of course, been recognised by many Western scholars and experts. Western governments in general have long ceased to insist on either a free market economy or a multi-party democracy as a condition for granting development aid to any country. The underdeveloped countries gladly accept such Western aid—as well as Soviet and (to a lesser extent) Chinese aid—to assist them on their own road of development which is neither liberal-capitalist nor Communist,

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neither Western-democratic nor ideologically totalitarian in the full meaning of that term. Still, the fact that the developmental successes of Russia, and to some extent of China, provided them with an alternative must not be underestimated. In the consciousness of the most articulate groups in the Third World, the West has ceased to be the *only* model of an advanced society, and it is not judged to be for them an *applicable* model—for the West is still seen as the colonial exploiter of yesterday and, in the guise of major Western corporations extracting raw materials or dominating the trade in them, as the economic exploiter of today.

In other words: the true long-term impact of Communism on the Third World is not to be measured by the number of states that have gone Communist or demonstratively "non-capitalist", but by the broad fact that the loss of the unique position of the Western economic and political model—most dramatically, the almost total disappearance of Western-style pluralistic democracy from the former colonies in recent decades—marks *the loss of the attraction of Western values* for a large part of the formative strata of those countries.

It is against that background that the recent growth of a militantly anti-Western attitude among the so-called non-aligned countries, who form the majority of the United Nations, takes on its full significance. Its major immediate causes are to be found in legitimate economic grievances, above all in the evolution of raw material prices in relation to industrial prices which has often all but wiped out the benefits of development aid and contributed to intolerable indebtedness, as well as in such political issues as white minority rule in Southern Africa and the well-oiled Arab mobilisation of sympathies against Israel. But the fundamental fact is that, decades after the decisive events of "de-colonisation" during which the founders of most of the new states were still determined to learn from the West in order to catch up with it in independence, the institutions and cultural values of the West have lost their hold on the minds of the leaders of many of these states. Though this process has been brought about in part by the real difference in their conditions and needs from those that formed the West, Communist ideology in its militantly anti-Western form has made a major contribution to it.

COMMUNISM, THEN, by creating an ideologically divided world, has severely limited the realm in which the values of Western civilisation are effective. It has condemned them to an underground existence in Eastern Europe. It has contributed to their diminishing attraction for the Third World. The Western city has withstood the Communist assault and proved its ability to find new creative solutions for its own problems. But in a transformed world environment, it is under siege.

The Fiction of Consensus

AN INTERDEPENDENT WORLD SOCIETY, such as has been created by the Industrial age, requires some kind of *world order* for its proper functioning. In the absence of world government, no world order can be enforced on sovereign states. In particular, it cannot guarantee the prevention of war. But even a non-enforceable and therefore necessarily imperfect world order may reduce the likelihood of war, may assure common norms of non-violent behaviour in the absence of war, and may impose a common minimum of civilised conduct even in time of war. Clearly, the effectiveness of such a non-enforceable world order rests ultimately not on the specific norms embodied by agreements in international law, but on a measure of consensus about the fundamental human values underlying and transcending those agreements. It depends, in other words, on *a measure of moral and cultural homogeneity* among the international actors that matter.

Such a measure of homogeneity existed within the "Concert of Powers" of the Europa-centric world of the 19th century. In the inter-War period, it was first limited by the partial rejection of Western values on the part of revolutionary Russia and then effectively destroyed by their virtually total rejection on the part of Nazi Germany. In the world emerging from World War II, the new order organised around the United Nations was based on the fiction that a consensus of values existed between the West and the Soviet bloc. It was the quickly-revealed absence of such a consensus which paralysed the United Nations. As the hold of Western values on the Third World emerging from "de-colonisation" has lessened, in part because of the different traditions and problems of the New Nations—but in part, also, because of the impact of anti-Western Communist influence—not only the political but

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also the moral and cultural division of the world has become more and more profound. The lack of even a minimum consensus on measures to deal with international terrorism is, in my view, a frightening symptom of the resulting degree of international anarchy. The possible consequences in conditions of proliferating nuclear weapons defy the imagination.

GIVEN THAT THE POLICIES of the Communist powers and the effects of Communist ideology have been major factors in this decay of the international order, the question must be asked whether Communist ideas and policies could possibly become the sources of an *alternative* world order.

After all, one of the fundamental tenets of Communist ideology claims that the liquidation of the capitalist ownership of the means of production will eliminate the causes of War, of National Rivalry, of Racial and Religious discrimination—in fact of all international violence and inhumanity, if not immediately of all social conflict. It is not least on this claim that the attraction of the Communist faith both for oppressed groups and for concerned idealists everywhere has been based.

Yet here again, the evidence of failure is devastating, By creating powerful national governments freed from all domestic controls or legal limitations, Communism has created the basis for new forms of national conflict between Communist states. Stalin's attempt to force ideological conformity on Yugoslavia by military threats, economic isolation, and political subversion was a first striking example. The same Khrushchev who blamed Stalin's "Great-Power chauvinism" for that conflict used military intervention against the anti-Stalinist leadership of the Hungarian Communists and became involved in irreconcilable conflict with the Chinese. Again, under Khrushchev's successors, reformed Communism in Czechoslovakia was crushed by military force, and the conflict with Peking escalated into border battles and massive troop concentrations by both sides. Whatever the concrete issues in dispute each time, the basic fact is that Communism in practice has turned out to be a form of idolatry of the National State, and that is incompatible with respect for any international order—even one based on Communist ideology.

In fact, in the absence of world government, an international order must rest on those needs of society which transcend national frontiers—and Communist ideology, as it has developed since Lenin's times, is allergic to those needs. It has helped to destroy the Western-based "bourgeois" international order of the past. It was, and is, incapable of putting another order in its place.

The Balance Sheet

COMMUNISM, THEN, has succeeded in forcibly modernising some non-Western nations by non-Western methods and turning two of them into Great Powers. But it has brought not greater equality and freedom, but greater inequality and oppression than would be accepted in the industrially advanced democracies of the West, and has consequently failed to make any lasting impact on them.

It has succeeded in dividing the world between the advanced democracies and the Communist dictatorships, and in turning many of the new, ex-colonial states away not only from Western models of development but from basic Western values—thus undermining the moral and cultural foundations of the Western-created international order. But it has utterly failed to create the moral and cultural foundations for another international order.

It has been effective as an engine of national modernisation and national power, and of international division and destruction. But it has been totally ineffective as a factor of social humanisation or of international peace.

It has become one of the major historical forces of our time—but a force promoting not the goals envisioned by Marx but the consequences of the means chosen by Lenin.

CAN THIS HISTORICAL COMMUNISM be taken to be a portent of a world to come? I do not think so.

The Western democracies, and the industrially advanced democracies in general, are vulnerable in many ways—to economic crisis, to political division, to cultural dissent. But again and again, they have shown sufficient creative flexibility to overcome their weaknesses at the critical moment and to achieve new milestones on the road to the fulfilment of their humanist goals. They have made repeated terrible mistakes in dealing with the Communist threat and have paid the penalty —by yielding Eastern Europe at the end of World War II, or by getting involved in military inter-

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vention in Viet Nam. But, again and again, they have proved their capacity to learn from their mistakes, to preserve their cohesion, and to stem the tide. They remain strong enough to prevent Leninist, or Stalinist, or Maoist Communism from "inheriting the earth."

A last question. Is Communism, having reached the limits of its achievements in this form, going to change radically from its historical character? I believe that in Western Europe and Japan that change *is* in progress. But in so far as it succeeds, it will cease to be Communism as we have known it. In Russia and Eastern Europe, a similar change is conceivable as the *ultimate* result of successful modernisation. But it is not "inevitable" in the sense of some quasi-Marxist law of "convergence." It is merely a condition for the Soviet bloc's progress to a higher level of social organisation, and for the restoration of the unity of the world.

And that condition may or may not be fulfilled.

The Black Halo

The halo of Judas is black, blacker than nightfall,
The disciple has started to teach
Leading the way
Pointing out his master to the keen killers
Their helmets sweating in the dark air
Their pikes sticking into the sky like fireworks.

The soldiers are preceded
By gentlemen from the city,
Dignitaries in velvet, a torch guiding them,
Charmed to capture the rebel and restore order,
Charmed to have found a traitor to do the kissing.

Eleven gold haloes circling eleven good faces
Jut into the crowd unsympathetically
Wearing a look-at-me nursery expression.

How shocking is the black halo of the traitor
Which blinked out at the touch of skin,
Brilliant as any till the deadly greeting.
It could not disappear, be the plain air
Round the head of an unimportant man.

Jesus looks as red and smug as an apple
Judas is a fox but would eat anything
They cling to each other
They depend on each other.

All this the bystander can see for himself.
The book has told us the sequel:
His goodness charred, he took leave
And hanged himself from a tree.
See his black halo crouching
Up in the leaves like a black cat.

Patricia Beer

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Angus Wilson

My Oxford

NONE of my family had been to Oxford. Nor to Cambridge, for that matter. Save in the expression "Cambridge blue", I do not remember to have heard that university mentioned until I was sixteen or seventeen. No other university, of course, was ever spoken of. We were essentially the sort of middle-class family that reposed upon "good" English public schools. My grandfather had come to one all the way from Scotland in the 1850s, and my father in the 1870s. All my brothers, save my delicate third brother, had been at such schools between 1900 and 1917. The first thing my family asked about any man was what school he had been at. With a decent public school behind you and what they called "a little social pull", a man could get an equally decent post in the City or in the colonies, and of course service officers had no need of universities. If a boy was especially brainy, or there was a tradition in the family of going into the Church. . . . Otherwise a good public school was all you needed.

The whole of this middle class has, I suppose, now entirely disappeared. Already, by the time my brothers came back from the Great War in 1918, a public school education by itself, without a little capital, was ceasing to be such a miraculous passport. Public schoolboys, including two of my brothers, acted as supers on the sets at Elstree or sold Electrolux vacuum-cleaners from door to door. After 1930, one of the tragedies of the Depression, as seen from Kensington and Eastbourne (my family viewpoints), was that public schoolboys were coming to be "almost a drug on the market." Luckily for me (in this respect only, let me hasten to say) my mother had died in spring 1929 when I was fifteen and so, in the Michaelmas term of 1932, when I was just turned nineteen, I went up to Merton College, Oxford.

The connection of events seems fortuitous but was direct. In the first place, had my mother been alive, her small capital (diminished by endless loans to my brothers and gifts to my father) would have been needed for her support. In the second place, her colonial pride in her father's self-made success, usually played down after decades of Kensington and South Coast rentier snobbery, would have probably asserted itself against the idea of my going to Oxford on a private income, even if it could have been afforded. She might have scraped and saved (as only she knew how) to send me there had I secured the closed scholarship from Westminster to Christ Church for which I entered. But I failed to satisfy the examiners. If I try now to recall how, I remember only that I may have made in my viva what I thought witty but what must have been insufferably superior remarks about these very South African maternal ancestors of mine to Patrick Gordon-Walker, later a Labour Cabinet Minister but then a young Christ Church don. And so I only got to Oxford as a commoner at Merton by the aid of my mother's capital which she had left me in her will—reasonably, since she had already helped my elder brothers and I was thirteen years younger than the youngest of them.

Through the enmeshment of family trustees and unpaid family debts to my mother, the sum that I finally received was a good deal smaller than she had reason to think she had left me; but it was enough to give me £300 a year at Oxford on top of my tuition fees, my college payments and my expenses in vacations. It was as my second brother, a headmaster of a preparatory school, who would dearly have loved to have been at Oxford himself, quite rightly said, a good income. I used, in later days, remembering the chronic impecuniosity of my family, to congratulate myself on having left Oxford with no debts. It was a self-deceiving congratulation, since £300 a year for term-time pleasures alone, in the deflation of the mid-'thirties, allowed me to live in a way almost deserving the popular description "like a lord."

Perhaps I should briefly describe this manner of living, since it formed the rather pleasurable material basis of my three years at Oxford. Some

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part of it was derived from what years of living with my father had taught me was "a good life." This principally consisted in eating out at restaurants and having "good food" as often as possible. I think that I ate in college only in the first two weeks of those three years—and that out of a fear of the consequences of not doing so. This fear was part of the general fear of communal college life that I felt in my first term, for, as I shall describe, coming from a London day school, I half-seriously clothed college life at first with all the terrors of boarding school life that I had derived from stories describing Eton under Keate in the 1820s, or, at best, Rugby under Arnold in the 1850s. In fact, I *was* acting against college regulations by not fulfilling a certain number of dinners in hall; but, as I never "signed off", I paid in full for dinners every night of my three years and consumed none of them, so the college authorities were the richer by some hundreds of dinners not eaten but paid for. It might have occurred to me that *this* was an example of inherited prodigality, but it never did; I saw it as the only way of avoiding "the too appalling food and company." In those first three weeks I had seen people throw bread at each other and had anticipated that before term was out this would have ended in bodily assaults. I had also received a garbled account of "sconces." I had not understood that these were forfeits by which you had to pay for other people's beers (something I should like to have done) but I thought rather that they were penalties in which beer was forcibly poured down one's throat. In any case the food, by the standards my father had given me from the Café Royal and the Trocadero, was vile, worse than that served at my brother's prep school, which was the nadir of my father's scale of feeding. After the first three weeks, I ate out in restaurants.

MY CLOSEST CIRCLE, especially in the early days, was a number of friends from Westminster—some at Christ Church, some at New College and elsewhere. It was natural that we should eat together as often as college regulations allowed. We soon found that the best food was at the George—it served that sort of good semi-French cuisine that still existed in the best English provincial restaurants before the war, before ignorant and pretentious "international" menus based on deep freezes had led to our present sad state of affairs. But whereas I think my friends ate out only on those evenings when they did not have to pay for college hall, I ate out every evening, often sitting by myself, elaborately consuming Sole Mornay and Meringue Chantilly with a book propped up against the vase of flowers that ornamented the table. I (and the others) could not by any means regularly afford the George and we ate at assorted restaurants, cafés, and "ladies'" tearooms. I remember no other place that seemed "good" save a restaurant in the Cornmarket where for a time they served excellent asparagus omelettes. As to drink, my father had years ago forsworn alcohol as a result of near cirrhosis of the liver, and I therefore knew little of wines. Only one of our circle, coming from a wealthier family, was used to drinking wine at all regularly. I think this lack of regular wine drinking was much more common in middle-class homes of some pretension in the inter-war years not only than now but than it had been in late Victorian times. At restaurants we drank normally gin and tonic; and, in our own rooms, a great deal of dry sherry (a peculiarly disgusting habit, I think now). On occasions of evening celebrations and parties we also drank, as I remember, port and liqueurs, especially cointreau. This curiosity becomes explicable when I reveal that the cocktail for smart parties—we drank it in large quantity on my twenty-first birthday—was a White Lady (gin and cointreau in suitable proportions). Later—from the summer term of my first year—when I had come to know the life better and had no more fears of college, I used to give luncheon parties in my rooms. The food for these was very good. I got to know the college chef, who understandably liked appreciation. His speciality was a first-class crême brulée. With these luncheons I provided wine—by whose advice I can't remember, it became habitually Liebfraumilch.

On top of this rather extravagant expense upon food, I smoked regularly about thirty-five or forty cigarettes a day, very costly small flat Turkish cigarettes called Melachrino, which I carried about with me in tins of a hundred. Occasionally I tried to economise by changing to Abdullah. But these seemed very ordinary, even though I smoked them in a long cigarette holder from which the stubs could be ejected by pressing a little button—so far as I know, a new amusing device. From my second year on, I also purchased from Hall Bros. in the High Street a good number of canary-coloured woollen waistcoats with brass buttons, a lot of foulard spotted scarves, and a pleasing selection of bottle green, maroon and dark crimson velvet ties (ordinary ties, not bow ties). These added a touch of elegance to my regulation undergraduate grey flannels, sports coats and umbrellas, that deceptively might have suggested to a stranger that I belonged to a smart Oxford set. There was, however, no intention of deceit in these sartorial accessories; it was simply that

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for the first time I could buy the clothes I wanted and I knew that I wanted these. The rest of my money went on books from Blackwell's—a good number both new and secondhand—which I paid for on account at the end of each term. I do not remember to have paid anything towards furnishing, save for a pair of hideous orange and apricot shot-silk cushion covers which I had made because my rooms "lacked colour."

All this must sound, and is, very small beer; but I state it because I remember my Oxford years always against a sense of pleasing material sufficiency and comfort. It would not have been so, I think, if I had gained that scholarship and gone to Christ Church, for then I should fairly quickly have made friends far richer than I was and rapidly have got into debt. As it was, I only came to know a few such people much later when I joined the OUDS—by which time my pattern of life was set and they were merely a handful among a varied circle of acquaintances. At Merton, I was probably financially better off than most of the undergraduates, and could make my own standards. I count this as one of the most important of the many advantages Merton gave to me.

At first I didn't feel it so, however. All my Westminster friends were at other colleges. There *was* a very small rich set at Merton, and in my first weeks they made a great deal of drunken noise on many nights. As, with my father's assistance, I had chosen some excellent rooms over the Junior Common Room, I noticed this noise particularly. It seemed the blood-curdling prelude to heaven knew what roastings and defenestrations. I was very "pansy" in manner and I was very conscious of it. The other new people who seemed out of it all were different. They came from various parts of the North and Midlands of England. A few of them were to become my close friends. But in those first weeks, I could as easily have confessed my loneliness and alarms to them as a warthog can communicate his fears of lion to a herd of zebras. Such people as visited me in my rooms came to ask me if I intended to play this or that athletic game—something I had never been expected to do in my last years at Westminster. Of course, I was not really expected to do so at college, but it all added to my feeling that I had joined Stalky and Co.

I remember that for some weeks I did not dare to stay in my rooms in the afternoons for fear I should be identified as an aesthete or a swot. I went for long and tedious walks into the countryside, and, only after one desperate and frozen visit to the pathetic little Oxford zoo, did I settle down to a programme of browsing the early afternoon away at Blackwell's, followed by china tea and walnut layer cake at Fuller's tea-room. Apart from my evenings spent with my Westminster friends, that first term was hell, in particular because I had greatly looked forward to unlimited reading of medieval history and now I found that because I had to take Pass Mods, my days were spent in elementary classes in Latin and Economics that seemed to have transported me back at least two years in time to the school world before School Certificate.

It was not surprising that, with my lifelong capacity for psychosomatic illnesses, I went down with jaundice after Christmas and most ungratefully told my father and my brother that I didn't want to return to Oxford. However, they nobly persuaded me against their financial interest, and I came back to what were to be uniformly happy (though not ecstatic) years.

I MUST DIGRESS here for a paragraph or two to say how mysterious I find that kind of permanent identification with Oxford and Oxford things that so many men appear to make. When I read of the Oxford days of Cyril Connolly or of Evelyn Waugh, I stand in amazement at the hypnotic effect that the university had upon them. It might have been so for me, too, I suppose, if I had been at Balliol. I had already been much influenced by one very Oxford-struck Balliol man, the historian John Edward Bowle, who had taught me history in my last two years at Westminster. He, I think, has never been wholly content away from Oxford, where he now resides. Other friends of mine, often successful and distinguished, seem to look forward to frequent visits to Oxford to regale themselves afresh with high-table gossip—happy those few of them who have All Souls Fellowships or dining rights at their colleges. Such lasting enchantment is clearly not confined to Oxford, for the very type of such men seems to have been E. M. Forster at King's. Nor is it wholly to do with the more celebrated or grander colleges. I count these friends happy in this curious pleasure. Clearly they are more discriminating than those who live for visits to their old schools. But I don't at all understand how their affections became so fixed. I was flattered and pleased when the Warden of Merton invited me to dine at High Table a few years ago; I was also delighted to be invited to speak at Westminster School. I live quite a lot in the past and to visit at intervals places which bring memories alive gives me great pleasure; but I greatly dislike an exclusive call upon my affections or loyalties of any one of these past places—Surrey, South Africa, Oxford, Kensington, Provence, Bloomsbury, East Anglia and so on—over the others. Yet for many people Oxford clearly has a magic

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that never leaves them.

It may be that a great part of these men and women had hoped or intended to become Oxford dons and make their lives there. I notice that they have in common with my Oxford don friends a kind of mythology that underlies their general gossip, in which the names of Oxford "figures"—Bowra, Sparrow, Berlin, David Cecil, Rowse, Trevor-Roper and many others—play a continuous part, standing all the time for something mysteriously more than the remarkable men who possess them. This is, of course, to be expected if you are part of the Oxford set-up, but if, in fact, your contacts are confined to a certain number of visits a year, it seems strange. It is not just gossip, it is the sense such people, who have known Oxford's magic, convey that "thought" and "civilisation" and the "real world" are inextricably bound up with the university. I had no idea or hopes of becoming a don, I aimed, at first, rather vaguely at schoolteaching and then later, more definitely, at getting a job in the British Museum. In any case, until I was forty, I suppose, I could not have imagined the centre of my life outside London. Therefore I never saw Oxford at any time as other than a place of temporary sojourn. I talked a great deal and listened to a great deal of talk about politics and literature, and history; but, as I shall show, it had little to do with what was being thought in serious academic circles in Oxford. Dons were either the few who had things to tell me about English history that interested me, or the many more whose first lectures in the term I attended to be reduced to painful suppressed giggles by what seemed to me the immensely comic quirks with which they delivered their boring discourses. I had to leave a lecture of the Regius Professor because my laughter set rattling the form on which I was sitting. Anything interesting I could find in books. The idea of knowing dons socially never entered my head. There was a famous university figure at Merton called Garrod who entertained undergraduates. I was clearly not the sort of undergraduate he entertained, for he never invited me; but I also am clear that it never occurred to me to get myself invited to his famous teas. I had met both John Sparrow and Maurice Bowra when I was a schoolboy, through John Edward Bowle, and had found them charming and entertaining; but, once again, I do not think that I even remembered that they were connected with Oxford when I was there.

Some part of this failure to respond to Oxford's importance I am pleased about. I was not an ambitious young man, using the university and its contacts for worldly advancement. When I meet such young men occasionally—presidents or secretaries of this or that—I am repelled and saddened, for they seem to be wasting their youth in exploiting it for their adult years. At least, my life at Oxford, however small and self-satisfied and over-glib, was enjoyed every minute for itself. But there was great loss in it. Not the loss of not having known famous dons, but something that this implies—a lack of humility before knowledge, and more still a lack of capacity to listen to difficult thinking, a protective irony and frivolity that lost me more in power to reason and evaluate than they saved me from boredom and pretension and intellectual snobbery. I was right, as were my friends, to think that we could supply sophistication and wit and elegance of living as good if not better than these distinguished dons could provide. But to see this was to see only the superficial. What I missed was the capacity to think hard and painfully; to have learned this would have been worth supporting a great deal of the cult-nonsense that surrounded Oxford's famous men. Ironically enough, the failure of my undergraduate life at Oxford which irks me most is something quite else. It is the fact that the architectural beauty of Oxford largely passed me by. I attended, I remember, a series of fascinating lectures on architectural history delivered by Goodheart Rendel at the Ashmolean, but it never occurred to me to look for what I had seen on the lantern screen in the streets and quads. I was not wholly damned, for I always felt a visual excitement in seeing the Queen's College, and I was quite right. I remember moments of transported joy in combined architectural and natural scenery—walking in the Botanical Gardens, in Addison's Walk, sitting one hot day preparing for Schools beneath the walls of Merton Fellows' Garden. But, in general, Oxford's visual beauty passed me by. Yet in fact this was not so serious, for twenty years later architecture began to exercise an increasing spell over me, and now a stay in Oxford is a continuous visual delight. To think about difficult things and listen to difficult thinking, let alone to express it, I shall never now learn.

I MUST CONTENT myself with the thought that I probably never could have done, and had I tried to do so at Oxford I should simply have crushed such originality and capacity for *aperçus* as I have beneath a dead weight of received thinking. Perhaps so, probably not. One thing offers some explanation. Oxford in the early 'thirties was not in that sense, I think, a "great" time. Of all the people I associated with in the OUDS only Sir Terence Rattigan and Peter Glenville have been figures of real influence in the theatre; most of the other actors and producers have faded out. Although I debated politics

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privately endlessly, I was not a Union man, beyond attending some famous debates. Yet I do not think that any of the undergraduates of my time have achieved political fame, unless it be John Freeman, whom I knew quite well, but I don't think he had political ambitions then. There are probably many well-known people who were Oxford undergraduates whom I never knew; but of my friends of those days the best known are most certainly women—Barbara Jackson (then Barbara Ward), Sally Chilver, the Principal of Lady Margaret Hall. The high 'twenties of Waugh and John Betjeman and Cyril Connolly and Harold Acton were behind us. The 'thirties poets of the Left, too, had gone down by the time I arrived. Only the war itself, in fact, lay ahead. It is against this background that I must briefly sketch the various positive ways in which I gained from Oxford. My London sophistication and my Westminster schooling and my camp carry-on attached me to the OUDS and past Oxford; Merton and the friends I made there from working-class homes in the Midlands and the North attached me to politics and the Left. The latter because it was a new experience was the more important; yet by now I should find it hard to say how much of either is left in me in the form in which I received them then. Very little, I think.

The central thread of my university life began with the small group (three or four) of Westminster friends at other colleges and remained with it to the end. We knew each other's families before we went up. We stayed at each other's houses in the vacation. We continued to know each other into adult years; and the only other survivor of the group is still a close friend of mine, D. P. Walker, a very distinguished scholar and Fellow of the British Academy. Three or four other undergraduates became part of our group, although none of them, in fact, through me. Two of us were historians; two studying French and German literature; two medicine. None, and it was a serious intellectual loss to me, philosophy. Otherwise, this mixture of subjects was good. It led me, for example, to read a good deal of French, and even German, literature which I should not otherwise have done; and started, in French at any rate, a life-long habit. It gave me some acquaintance with the current problems in biology and medicine. As we none of us studied English literature, this (and in particular the English novel) became our lingua franca. I read a prodigious number of the great English novelists. For all this I am very grateful, although it can hardly have helped my concentration on my history studies. We spent evenings reading plays together over port or madeira. The standard of intelligence among our small group varied greatly as did our centres of study. One friend, in particular, who died in the war, had a strong personality but rather small reasoning powers. Humour, therefore, and above all humorous gossip and amateur psychologising, inevitably loomed large, for they dissolved any mental disparities. We were a civilised, old maidish group, whose genuine wit was incommunicable because it was so inturned. I gained so much from the group and it was so much part of my life for so long, that I cannot easily stand away from it. I think we had a lot of laughter and interesting talk, but I think we were inevitably rather smug—more than justifiably sure that Jane Austen had been right in basing her insights upon the compass of three or four families.

I was, however, the rover of the group, more naturally sociable, finding communication with all I met not only easy but almost unavoidable. I thus lived a strange life—as one of a very tight little group, from which I suppose I received nothing that I had not known before I went to Oxford, save for the independence that we all had of being at last away from our families; and also as someone who knew a number of sets of people or individuals—some very well—quite outside the little group, and quite unlike it in background or concerns. Two or three of these I shall write something of, as I could not have met them had I not gone to Oxford. They altered my outlook quite considerably, and, I think, they are not unrepresentative of the changing Oxford of of the early 'thirties.

I THINK I CAN SAFELY SAY that, until I went to Oxford, I had never known anyone of working-class background. There had, of course, been my London promiscuous sexual encounters. Many of these had been with cockney working-class young men. But this life which had begun before I was sixteen was a world as separate from my daily life as were my dreams (I dreamt and do dream a lot). It was to be many years before I began happily to connect the two lives, and certainly Oxford was for me something quite apart from active sexual life. Apart from that, the only working-class people I had known were servants—and, given my family's near penury, these were not many. I had never known anyone well who came from north of the Home Counties; and, apart from one visit with my father to Scotland to revisit his boyhood home in Dumfriesshire, I had never penetrated into England north of Hampstead. I think this is literally true. The glory of Merton was that by the natural course of events, simply through casual encounters, and more still through shared tutorials, I found myself among a group of people whose backgrounds were in varying kinds what I had been brought up

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to call "working class" and who came from various parts of the Midlands and North. I was so class-bound that I was not very class-conscious. Thus it came about that I knew these very agreeable and interesting men merely as my fellow history students, and only gradually realised that their backgrounds and assumptions were so entirely different from my own. It was the very best way that it could have come about and I am deeply grateful to Merton for it. Of course, after a time, out of this agreeable and interesting group, there emerged two who were more agreeable and much more interesting to me. I owe them both a lot.

THE FIRST WAS a very small Jewish man from the Midlands with very expressive eyes and an irony of approach which fitted well to my own. It was with him that I sat talking, first about the history we were studying together, and then about life in general, until my scout (a very paternal man) expressed great concern that each morning the ashes of my fire were still glowing because I had sat up so late. I think those night-long talks were some of the most pleasing things of my Oxford time (and they had to be for me to endure being awake after midnight, something that all my life I've avoided since so much of my childhood was made miserable by my family's habits of very late hours to which I was monstrously expected to adapt at a very early age). I do not remember what Norman's father worked at, although it was in a factory; but the family were good solid labour people. I had for some years, through the influence of well-to-do socialist parents of school friends and of left-wing masters at Westminster, vaguely professed Labour views. It was only now when I listened to Norman that these acquired meaning. It wouldn't be true to say that he did not propagandise, but only in so far as he could not bear to see someone intelligent that he liked so totally ignorant of the life that he knew so well. I think that I too felt a need over and above communication to convince him of the reality of middle-class and London life of which he was equally ignorant. We presented our lives and our worlds to each other, however, always in an ironic and absurd light. It was probably the only way that either of us could have accepted the reality that lay below the exaggerations.

His scepticism about Oxford and his determination not to allow it to penetrate his Staffordshire Jewish self was complete. We used to go together to Labour Club meetings and took part in occasional demonstrations. But he felt and he conveyed to me that this was all a kind of play-acting of the real thing as he knew it at home. And of course he was right. As a result, we had as often to leave the Labour Club meetings because of our uncontrollable giggles as we did the history lectures. In particular, I remember going from a lecture of Dora Russell's on her school because we had woven a fantasy throughout her speech that she was Mae West in disguise sabotaging the Labour movement. This contemptuous approach to undergraduate politics meant, of course, that I never knew the aspiring politicians and famous left-wing dons of my time. The most prominent of these dons was Dick Crossman. Judging by his arrogance and cultural myopia when I met him in later years, I did not lose as much in this as I did, in general, by my failure to meet famous Oxford figures. In two different vacations I visited Norman at his Bilston home. His family were all very small people like him and his parents were Orthodox Jews. This lent a certain exoticism for me to their very pleasant household. He and his brother and sister had enjoyed a greater education than their parents, to whom they were devoted, but their parents were both highly intelligent people. This gave to the exotic quality of the home a sense of familiarity also, for my father, whom I equally loved, was also a less educated man than I and also highly intelligent. The only thing, in fact, about Norman's family that fitted my stereotyped image of working-class life was that they lived in a council house. I emphasise this because once again I acquired a sense of a world totally different from my own without any debasing self-conscious sense of "getting to know the workers." I was simply making some new unusual friends whose loyalties were very stoutly declared for the working class. I was also seeing Bilston, Darlaston and Wednesbury as they were at the height of the depression, and this was most educative of all.

In return Norman came to stay at the house of my very impoverished, extremely chi-chi Catholic brother Pat, who was at that time trying desperately to run a tea-room at Pevensey. He got on with my brother as well as, I hope, I got on with his family. And I think he may have learned something from that visit also. I have seen him only once since the war. But I was told recently that he concluded from my writings that I had not changed at all since Oxford. This I know to be absurd. Recently I saw him on television speaking on behalf of Manchester Labour City Council. He seemed to me not to have changed. This is probably equally absurd.

IN MY SECOND YEAR I got to know Denis. He always spoke as though he was a working-class boy; but his father was in fact, I believe, an Inspector of Education in Manchester. Yet I suppose that he and his brother were the first two university-educated boys in the family. Denis has remained a close friend. I owe to him a different widening of my outlook. He was conventionally

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and stoutly Labour and had the habitual irony of all my friends. But he had a very confident attitude towards society and his future. He meant to succeed and he did, becoming a very top civil servant. Although I had no confident ambition, he gave me the sense that men who meant to be at the top were not people with whom I could make no communication—a first step to my later greater social confidence. He was also a thoroughly assured heterosexual. Had I gone to Christ Church, I think that with the numbers of South of England public schoolboys there, I should never have made such friendships. I am again grateful to Merton.

But not all Merton men were Northern or Midlands working class. Next door to me and a year senior was Stuart, the very epitome of a Byronic public schoolboy. Tall, handsome, enormously charming, with a wide Oxford social range, an easy culture, he seemed to me a figure out of a book. But he proved to be a very kind and friendly senior. And I in turn, I think, a good neighbour when he returned on occasion late at night from what I thought of as a gilded Oxford, rather helplessly drunk. Perhaps it was this relationship, or perhaps it was his having some musical instrument, I think a mandolin, but I always saw him as Steerforth, which, despite Dickens's overt moral disapproval of his character, is for me a very high compliment indeed. I think that he wondered why I should lead such a mousy life and have such mousy friends, and he persuaded me into a smarter Merton set—first to act in *The Doctor's Dilemma* in the Merton Floats and then to be a member of an exclusive dining club, The Myrmidons, where we wore special violet evening coats and violet ties. The dinners were most agreeable and delicious. And, once again, I am grateful to him for this entry to what still seems to me a direct Victorian survival with its deliberate intention of intoxication, its witty drunken speeches and its patronising chaffing of the scout who waited on us. It could have been Dickens once more—Pip and the Finches of the Grove. Perhaps it was for this reason that I never felt I quite made the grade in the smart Merton world for, if it was sophisticated, it was also determinedly manly in the old Regency sense of the world.

I CAME TO ANOTHER OXFORD world of sophistication, by chance, because Peter Glenville, the theatrical producer, had rooms next to a friend of mine at Christ Church. He, too, urged me into a wider life, which meant the OUDS, where I played in Marlowe's *Dr Faustus*. But my greatest success was in a smoker to which Peter brought Ivor Novello and (against the OUDS rules) Gladys Cooper. Here I did a skit of a well known débutante (I think) who had played the heroine in *Faustus* with a coy song, "I won't be kissed on the lips", and represented one of the deadly sins in a chorus. How 'nineties our views still were may be seen by the fact that I represented the sin by wearing flame-coloured pyjamas and carrying a madonna lily. I enjoyed all the OUDS life, including the Sunday breakfasts, very much, and through it went to a number of sophisticated parties at which my camp wit went down rather better than among the Myrmidons. As to the aura of wickedness that still hung round the OUDS from the 'twenties, it never seemed to me to go further than "daring" talk and camp flirtation. From my background of London promiscuity, I thought it all rather absurd. But now I'm inclined to wonder. Despite my gay chatter, I did carry a governessy aura around with me at Oxford and, for all I know, as soon as I left the parties everyone may have relaxed and started to have it off.

Finally I owe a debt to another group of three men at Merton, very intelligent, public school, sophisticated and dissipated. They were a year after mine, and perhaps this is why—sign of things to come—their greatest friends were all the most intelligent girls from Somerville. The smart Christ Church set, for example, went on in the old way and knew no women undergraduates, only debs from London and the shires. My friendship with these young women was a very enjoyable aspect of my Oxford life. From Barbara I borrowed the clothes I wore in the smoker. With the assistance of Sally I dressed up as the stepmother of one of our friends and completely spoofed the middle-aged parents of another at a tea-party. I can remember now how, dressed in tweeds and looking, I imagine, rather masculine, I leant forward to the conventional middle-class father and, cutting out his wife, said, "You and I are rather more up to date, aren't we? We can appreciate Cézanne." And his gallant, flirtatious agreement.

I mention this absurd episode because based on it, I believe, has grown up the sort of legend that always overtakes fact. An Oxford don's wife said to me recently, "I hear you spent nearly all your time at Oxford dressed as a woman. What fun those days must have been." Such is how legend overtakes the very simple original which I have tried to set down here—an original much too shy to be in the smart set anyway, despite my continuous amusing chatter, an original who was pleased enough when his name got once or twice into the *Cherwell*, but who, in the main, enjoyed an Oxford that might have been any other place that allowed one lots of time to do just what one wanted. I am a little surprised, looking back, however, that I didn't want to do rather more.

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Michael Longley

Peace

after Tibullus

Who was responsible for the very first arms deal—
The man of iron who thought of marketing the sword?
Or did he intend us to use it against wild animals
Rather than ourselves? Even if he's not guilty
Murder got into the bloodstream as gene or virus
So that now we give birth to wars, short cuts to death.
Blame the affluent society: no killings when
The cup on the dinner table was made of beechwood,
And no barricades or ghettos when the shepherd
Snoozed among sheep that weren't even thoroughbreds.

I would like to have been alive in the good old days
Before the horrors of modern warfare and warcries
Stepping up my pulse rate. Alas, as things turn out
I've been press-ganged into service, and for all I know
Someone's polishing a spear with my number on it.
God of my Fathers, look after me like a child!
And don't be embarrassed by this handmade statue
Carved out of bog oak by my great-great-grandfather
Before the mass-production of religious art
When a wooden god stood simply in a narrow shrine.

A man could worship there with bunches of early grapes,
A wreath of whiskery wheat-ears, and then say Thank you
With a wholemeal loaf delivered by him in person,
His daughter carrying the unbroken honeycomb.
Lord, if you will keep me out of the firing line
I'll pick a porker from the steamy sty and dress
In my Sunday best, a country cousin's sacrifice.
Someone else can slaughter enemy commanders
And, over a drink, rehearse with me his memoirs,
Mapping the camp in wine upon the table top.

It's crazy to beg black death to join the ranks
Who dogs our footsteps anyhow with silent feet—
No cornfields in Hell, nor cultivated vineyards,
Only yapping Cerberus and the unattractive
Oarsman of the Styx: there an anaemic crew
Sleepwalks with smoky hair and empty eye-sockets.
How much nicer to have a family and let
Lazy old age catch up on you in your retirement,
You keeping track of the sheep, your son of the lambs,
While the woman of the house puts on the kettle.

I want to live until the white hairs shine above
A pensioner's memories of better days. Meanwhile
I would like peace to be my partner on the farm,
Peace personified: oxen under the curved yoke;

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Compost for the vines, grape-juice turning into wine,
Vintage years handed down from father to son;
Hoe and ploughshare gleaming, while in some dark corner
Rust keeps the soldier's dreary weapons in their place;
The labourer steering his wife and children home
In a hay cart from the fields, a trifle sozzled.

Then, if there are skirmishes, guerrilla tactics,
It's only lovers quarrelling, the bedroom door
Wrenched off its hinges, a woman in hysterics,
Hair torn out, cheeks swollen with bruises and tears—
Until the bully-boy starts snivelling as well
In a pang of conscience for his battered wife:
Then sexual neurosis works them up again
And the row escalates into a war of words.
He's hard as nails, made of sticks and stones, the chap
Who beats his girlfriend up. A crime against nature.

Enough, surely, to rip from her skin the flimsiest
Of negligees, ruffle that elaborate hair-do,
Enough to be the involuntary cause of tears—
Though upsetting a sensitive girl when you sulk
Is a peculiar satisfaction. But punch-ups,
Physical violence, are out: you might as well
Pack your kit-bag, goose-step a thousand miles away
From the female sex. As for me, I want a woman
To come and fondle my ears of wheat and let apples
Overflow between her breasts. I shall call her Peace.

Zbigniew Herbert

Attempt to Dissolve Mythology

The gods met in a shack at the outskirts of town. Zeus as usual made a long and boring speech. The ultimate conclusion: we must dissolve the organisation, enough senseless conspiracy, we must enter this rational society and somehow survive. Athena was whimpering in the corner.

The final profits were divided honestly—this should be stressed. Poseidon had an optimistic attitude; he roared loudly that he'll be all right. The guardians of navigable streams and cleared forests felt the worst. Privately they all counted on dreams, but no one wanted to speak about them.

No motions were passed. Hermes abstained from voting. Athena whimpered in the corner.

Late in the evening they were returning to the city with forged papers in their pockets and handfuls of small change. As they crossed a bridge Hermes jumped into the river. They watched him drown, but no one tried to save him.

Opinions were divided as to whether this was a bad omen or, on the contrary, a good one. At any rate it was a starting point toward something new and uncertain.

Translated by John and Bogdana Carpenter

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NOTES & TOPICS

European Notebook

By François Bondy

Public & Private

Paris

ONE EVENING M. Escaro, a member of the staff of *Le Canard Enchaîné*, happened to notice some strange plumbers at work in that journal's new offices in the Rue St Honoré. It turned out that they had not been repairing the pipes, but had been installing microphones in the chimney piece; and the men were later identified as agents of the security service (DST). The latter, and the Minister of the Interior of the time, protected the four men concerned, who refused to appear for a confrontation in the chambers of Judge Bernard. Because of "reasons of state", the forces of law and order were unable to compel them to do so. Had there been a similar relationship between the executive and the machinery of justice in the United States, the Watergate "plumbers" would never have had to confess.

Now, three years after the affair, which caused a great sensation, Judge Pinsseau (Judge Bernard's successor) has dismissed the journal's action at a hearing held at a date that very nearly prevented the plaintiff from appealing. In the hope of depriving them of this opportunity, all the usual practices (*e.g.* previous consultation between the lawyers) were omitted. Judge Pinsseau's reasons for dismissing the action deserve to be permanently recorded in the annals of justice—they remind one of the story of the broken jug which, in the first place, the borrower never received and, in the second place, was broken beforehand in any case.

First of all, the judge held that in the absence of a confrontation no one could be personally charged with the offence; then, on the other hand, he held that no offence had been committed. This for two remarkable reasons. For one thing, the penal code did not exist "to protect buildings even from violent measures"—those were his words—and M. Escaro had just happened to be passing by and was not using the premises for professional purposes. For another, it was obvious that "journalists in editorial offices conducted only political, general, or professional conversations"; hence there could be no trespassing on their "private sphere" by secret telephone tapping. After this judgment it is clear that journalists in newspaper offices never discuss private matters either among themselves or on the telephone, and that any discussion of political, general or professional matters can legitimately be tapped. This would seem finally to have disposed of the awkward problem of the "agents" who had to be protected.

THERE IS AN ARGUMENT on the other side that deserves to be noted. A journal such as *Le Canard Enchaîné* is not exactly bashful about publishing details about the private lives of individuals in the public eye. Why, then, should it make such a fuss if, for once, it is itself the object of indiscreet inquiries?

But so far neither the government nor any private individual has brought a successful action against *Le Canard* for an infringement of secrecy or of the private sphere. An "abyss of treason"—to use Dr Adenauer's phrase in connection with the famous *Spiegel* case—has never been attributed to it.

True, the private sphere is a vague term. I note in one authoritative text, "What belongs to that sphere can be stated neither in general nor once and for all. . . . " Secret tapping of conversations in French newspaper offices does not apparently count as an infringement of that sphere. Not only the press will anxiously await the outcome of the appeal.

French judges recently complained of the public announcement by the police and the Minister of the Interior of the guilt of certain persons accused of murder before they had even been charged by an examining magistrate. This was indeed extremely shocking. But how can Judge Pinsseau credibly take offence at any governmental irregularity?

Italian "Western"?

Rome

SOMEBODY who saw the young man collapse as he was shot by the storekeeper shouted, "But that's Re Ceccone!" It was indeed the famous young football star, idol of the Roman fans of the Lazio team. One sensation followed the other. Now the jeweller who killed the Lazio "calciatore" (he leaves a widow with two children) has been acquitted of murder.

The cries are loud of "Class Justice"—a jeweller can fire at will and pay no penalty. But, as I

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follow the story, it reminds one of the classic Japanese film in which the tragedy appears differently from each differing personal perspective. The Italian District Attorney saw a trigger-happy "bourgeois self-made-man" and "upstart" who, when he spotted a long-haired "cappelloni", reached for his pistol. Why was he armed anyway? "He simply wanted to get rid of chaps who were different. . . ."

It appears to be true that Bruno Trabocchini, our jeweller, reached quickly for his side-arm. Once he fired some warning shots at a "scippatore" who was running away with a woman's hand-bag (he thought it was his wife who was being victimised). What was Trabocchini's defence? "*Ho famiglia!*"—the reply of every Italian in trouble. After his acquittal he sold his jewellery shop and left Rome. It was said that he feared the revenge of the Lazio sporting club which had actually put in a legal claim for compensation for the loss of the athletic services of a soccer star. Luciano Re Ceccone was a fellow of infinite jest, and when he and a friend barged into Trabocchini's shop and shouted "Hands up, this is a stick-up!" he was knocked off in a blink of an eye-lash.

Of course it was a stupid joke, especially in a city where shop-keepers, with or without jewels in glass-cases, have been robbed left and right. It could be that football stars allow themselves special bits of theatricality because they think they have faces with instant recognisability. And why shoot at all? Was the jeweller not adequately insured against all possible losses? Even if it had been a real robbery it wouldn't have ruined him. Was it, perhaps, a case of self-defence? "But", thundered the District Attorney, "we aren't in the Wild West (*in un paese di frontiera*)! . . ."

This was probably a bit much, for he failed to convince the court in Rome. Can a shopkeeper, and especially one with diamonds in the window, ever feel unthreatened? A few days after the tragic incident in Rome I noted the report in a newspaper of the murder of a jeweller named Candido Bressan in San Giovannia Lupatoto near Verona who had, on command, quickly put up his hands and handed over the loot. On the day of Trabocchini's acquittal I saw another news-item about a shooting in a Turin furrier's shop; the victim was a poor girl who had come to serve the morning Espresso. It would seem that not only Clint Eastwood in the so-called "spaghetti Westerns" shoots at the drop of a hat. This morning I see that two young Italian policemen were shot at an Autostrada control point.

It happens to be my impression, for what it is worth, that the so-called villains of the "Class Justice" system—the judges, the policemen, the prison wardens—are less repressive than simply intimidated. Beware of out-dated slogans in trying to understand Italy today! The notion that a shop-keeper ought to understand a joke and not always think of self-defence (because, after all, "Italy is not in the Wild West")—Well, the realities are rather different.

Sinister Thoughts on Left & Right

Of the Devils & Bilateral Man—By DONALD G. MACRAE

"THE POLITICAL LEFT only appears 'sinister' if your own political inclinations are on the Right. There are still countries, such as my own, where it is right to drive on the left!"

So Sir Edmund Leach,[1] but not me, driving apart. Language, the medium in which men live as fish live in the sea, is not so easily dismissed or duped. Left *is* sinister, *is* of the Devil's party, *is* revolutionary and of revolt. Prometheus and Milton's Satan are of the left. So is St Thomas Aquinas, who has been, precisely like the Devil, called the first Whig. In the tattiest provincial opera, performing Gounod's *Faust*, Mephisto enters "opposite prompt", from the performers' left. And, as William Blake gives evidence, God is ambiguously ambidextrous. And as the physicists tell us, there *is* a bias in the spin of the most fundamental particles, the elements of the material world—they mostly go it appears widdershins, anti-clockwise, like witches at a Sabbat.[2]

Left and Right appear at first thought merely subjective. After all they seem only the direct consequences of our own bodily arrangements and subjective convenience. We are basically bilaterally symmetrical creatures. Would a radial sea-urchin or starfish, if intelligent, need the categories of left and right? What is on our left is on our right if we turn through 180 degrees, and what could be more personal and trivial than

[1] E. Leach, *Culture and Communication* (Cambridge, 1976), p. 54.

[2] See D. G. MacRae, "The Body as Social Metaphor" in *The Body as a Medium of Expression* ed. Benthall and Prothemus (London, 1975).

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that? But this subjectivity is illusory. Let me use an illustration from Kant in paraphrase. Suppose I imagine a universe consisting of a single intelligent eye and a single, empty, glove. Then the intelligent eye would still be able meaningfully to assign a significant asymmetry to that glove, that is to observe whether it was left or right. In the, sort of space in which we conduct the ordinary business of life—two-dimensional surfaces, three-dimensional volumes—left and right are fundamental, even to intelligent but radially organised intelligence, if such exists.

The ascriptions of Left and Right in society are not universal or identical in all cultures but they are so consistent that one can I think claim that there are universal social *attitudes* about them in all human groupings.[3]

Let me list some of them, banal though they may sometimes seem. I will not set them out in a table of constants, far less of binary oppositions, though of course some of them will easily submit to such Procrustean treatment. Others however are refractory, and in the age of Lévi-Strauss (whose name itself contains at least two binary contrasts) and computers working by binary arithmetic, it is important to remember that God and nature and society can all count beyond two.

Left is about emotion: the heart, the seat of emotion in our cultures, is on the left. Right is about reason. Left is sinister (literally), while right is right and law.[4] Left, then, is heteronomous and heterodox while Right is autonomous but also orthodox. Right is the prompt side of the stage and, therefore, about direction and instruction; and Left is the "opposite prompt." Left is feminine and labile where Right is masculine and firm. Left is clumsy, "cack-handed" or "corry-fisted", *gauche* or *finkisch*. Left is weak; Right, "I'd rather be right", strong. The sacred, the dead and death itself are all associated with Left; and it is, at the Christian judgment, the direction of damnation; it is also the side of the *fall* of the damned in much iconography of the Last Judgment. Right is the side of the salvation, the ascension, the manifestation—back to the familiar puns of ordinary language—of salvation and of life. But Left is also sacred, while Right is secular and commonplace. And yet, if we think about those rituals which cleanse pollution, Right is not incongruous with the sacred; Left is about filth and its cleansing, while Right may be about the clean. Left is weak, is less, is "off", and Right is strong, more, and "on." (Think about the directions in which the switches, controls, knobs, of familiar technical devices like gramophones, cameras, cars, *etc.* all operate.) Right is clock-wise while Left is widdershins. The Right is stable and preserving—the right hand of God is the hand that preserves. Does it follow that the Left is about novelty and change? Certainly the Left is *pliable* and therefore perhaps innovatory; it is also expressive in social metaphors.

AND SO ON.... Even day and night, sun and moon, are associated respectively with Left and Right. Now, in politics, we are told that Left and Right are the historical accidents of French history. Well, perhaps. But while I am no Marxist, I am suspicious of historical accidents until I have sifted the evidence for alternative explanations. No doubt the Paris revolutionaries gave their seating in assembly no great thought. But equally I find it hard to believe that the adoption of the vocabulary of left and right and above all the persistence of that vocabulary is completely random and innocent. Probability—no more, but no less—inclines me to believe that this all but universal usage recognises something older and even deeper. After all in a way Professor Leach himself is an example of what I am saying. It is perfectly possible and honourable to adopt a left commitment and at the same time gain a *frisson* from so doing. Rebels, including the most necessary rebels, have taken courage from Milton's Satan, defiant and enduring, bound by and to his "study of revenge" for ancient wrong, to the resolution "not to yield." After all Satan is sib to Prometheus, defier of Zeus, aider of men.

Mephistopheles is a special case. Between Marlowe's Dr Faustus and Goethe, John Milton intervenes. Marlowe's Mephisto is mediaeval, the eater of souls. The one modern thing about him is that he is also an object of pity, for he bears his own judgment, denial of the vision of God, with him through eternity. Mephisto in Goethe's *Faust* is post-Miltonic and also pre-Christian,

[3] See R. Hertz, *Death and The Right Hand* (London, 1960) and R. Needham (ed.), *Right and Left; Essays in Dual Symbolic Classification* (Chicago, 1973).

[4] And, thus, in many languages a kind of virtuous pun.

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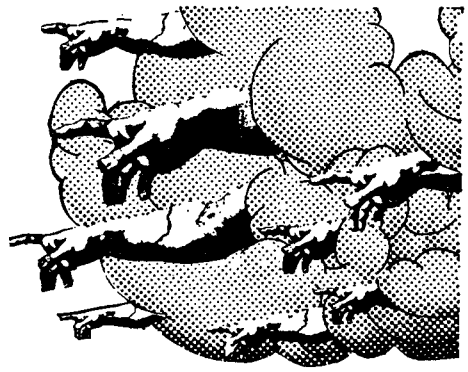
NEW
FROM CALIFORNIA

The New Religious Consciousness

Edited by Charles Y. Glock and Robert N. Bellah



Since the middle 1960s new religious movements have burgeoned all over America. These signal a new self-awareness and spiritual sensitivity among many people, especially among the nation's youth. Why is this happening? What do these movements teach? How do they relate to other currents of change, such as communal living, new forms of group therapy, and radical politics?

Beginning in 1971, an extensive research project was undertaken by a team of sociologists, historians, and theologians who wanted answers to just these questions. Through a combination of interviews and participant observation they studied new religious and quasi-religious groups in the San Francisco Bay Area, the spawning ground for upwards of one hundred such movements over the last decade.

Detailed reports are offered on several movements, ranging from Eastern-based religious cults (Healthy-Happy-Holy, Hare Krishna, and Divine Light) to quasi-religious organizations (the New Left, Esalen, *est*, Scientology, and Synanon) to movements based on conventional Western religious traditions (Christian World Liberation Front, Catholic Charismatic Renewal, and the Church of Satan). The authors also report on the impact of these movements on established religions and the populations at large. Taken together with a companion volume by Robert Wuthnow (see below), this provides the first comprehensive study of American countercultural belief systems.

496 pages, £9.75

The Consciousness Reformation

Robert Wuthnow

Over the last decade there has been much speculation about the nature and causes of the many profound social changes that have occurred recently in American life. Why are there so many new religious movements? How do these relate to the growth of communal living and other experiments with new life styles? What are the effects of these changes on standards of moral conduct, styles of family life, etc? Mr. Wuthnow directed one part of a large research project that attempted to answer these questions.

The author finds that belief in the supernatural is declining, which tends to undermine established religious organizations. On the other hand, mystical and experiential understandings of reality are now much more popular; hence the growth of new religious movements and the popularity of meditation and new forms of psychotherapy.

320 pages £10.00

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the scourge of Job. He is shabby-genteel, but very powerful; the spirit that denies is inevitably sinister. His denials are the foundations of criticism, and they are founded in empiricism. He would often have been very at home in any senior common room. (And of course, to many populists and fundamentalists, that is exactly the sort of place where he actually is at home.)

ONE CAN LINK THIS in a way that is not merely trivial and playful with Karl Marx himself, and the link here is surely a bonding of "sinister" and "left." The literature of romanticism is full of Miltonic Satanism and defiance. The romantic exile, outcast, wanderer and challenger of things has a double ancestry. On the one hand, he descends from the *picaro*, the ragged and less than socially marginal vagabond whom we first meet in the Spanish fiction of the 16th century; we find him in the Germany of the Thirty Years War, in Defoe and above all in that culmination of the picaresque, *Gil Blas*. Now the picaro (from *Lazarillo de Tormes* onwards) is the first cousin, the most obvious recruit, of brigands and bandits. Put him into the setting of Piranesi's prisons and he becomes romantic. Set him in the landscape of Salvator Rosa and he becomes noble. He is brought close, by this change of setting, to natural man—naturally free—proud, autonomous, antinomian—naturally, then, a spirit that denies.

Here is the other part of the romantic rebel's lineage: Prometheus and Milton's Satan. He is of the Devil's party, and of Byron's and Schiller's. As Marxists would say—and as I suggested above—it is "no accident" that Marx himself when young was known as *der Mohr* and rejoiced in the name. The source is Schiller's *Die Rauber*, and the appellation is more than a pun or a reflection on Marx's swarthy complexion. Karl Marx is close enough to Karl Moor for the pun, but Karl Moor is—the play was written in 1781—the romantic brigand, the *picaro* who is truly noble. Karl Moor is rejected by his father, the Count, and his outlaw band of scoundrels is justified by the corruption of civil society. Unfortunately, Karl Moor comes to a good end, reconciled to society and its *Recht*. But the impact of the play is rather like that of the confessions of repentant whores; the pun is in the vice and its description. A metonymic relation connects Karl Marx to Karl Moor, to the rebels of the Left.

Probably Karl Marx himself was perfectly aware of all this, just as he may have identified his somewhat vagabond university career with that of Karl Moor. Obviously it does nothing to change the veridicity or otherwise of Marxism; but it does illuminate an allegiance to the ancient constellation of attitudes in which left, *pace* Sir Edmund Leach, is consciously sinister.

AND, IN THE END, does left become right, as Karl Moor becomes reconciled and submissive to the law (*das Recht*)?

One of the ambitions of the political Left is always that after the necessary change, the transformation of society by enlightenment, or reform, or revolution and catastrophe, all ancient oppositions will be healed. Law and Will, Male and Female, Town and Country, shall be, at best, made one—at worst, be reconciled. The romantic exile will return home. Antique evil and injustice will cease. The oppositions of class will be ended. Nature and Art (or artifice, or science) will be united; and the noble savage will also be the natural sage.

I cannot share such dreams. They have been what Georges Sorel called "myths"—they are also myths in the two ordinary uses of that word but that is another matter—and by that Sorel meant that they have been the legitimating charters of much social and political action which I cannot, save case by case, subject to any "felicific calculus" of benefit and of cost.

However, we are obstinately bilateral creatures; and left and right remain fundamental categories of physical space. And I would guess, of social space and of continuing political usage too.

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Art & Architecture

Frames to Frameworks

Changes in Architectural Thinking—By ALAN COLQUHOUN

ARCHITECTURAL LITERATURE seems to follow definite patterns. Most of the books produced at any one moment, whatever the apparent diversity of their subject matter, tend to reflect similar themes and obsessions. This phenomenon is certainly not restricted to architecture—it is true of all cultural discourse. But it is particularly true of architecture at the present moment, when the modern movement is passing through one of its recurrent crises—perhaps the most serious one since its beginning over half a century ago.

In reaction to the optimism and large-scale thinking of the 1960s (a period which itself claimed to have overcome the academicism into which the modern movement had declined), architects have retreated to a more cautious position which recognises that their power to alter the environment as a whole—let alone the social basis of this environment—is severely limited. At the same time an attitude of mind is emerging which no longer conceives of architectural creation as an open-ended advance into a utopian future, but rather as a process which takes place in a specious present. This "present" includes much of what was previously thought to belong to a superseded past, and it may be that the power of architecture to communicate at all relies on its ability to understand and transform its own language.

Such a realisation cannot reproduce the eclecticism of the 19th century. The manner in which tradition can be acknowledged has itself changed, and it is the unprecedented nature of the present situation which is responsible for the divergence of views about the relation of architecture to history. The spectrum of opinion extends from vernacular semi-revival to a fresh look at the early phases of the modern movement itself. This diversity has been called pluralism. What is certain is that it is not eclecticism. Though certain factions may advocate a sort of eclecticism, the situation as a whole is not the same as that of the 19th century, when there was a universal belief in the connotational power of past styles.

The 1960s were characterised by two tendencies, both of which emphasised the "process" of architectural production rather than its final achievement. The first was a tendency towards seeking the laws of architecture outside architecture itself—in mathematics, computer technology, systems analysis, or social analysis. The second was an enormous extension both of architecture's physical scale and of its imagery. The city was no longer thought of as consisting of individual buildings but as a continuous and growing structure which dissolved the distinction between architecture and town planning, while its expressive power was thought to lie less in the conventional elements of architectural construction than in that of the new technologies of mass consumption, space research, and—in the case of Archigram—the imagery of the pop movement of the Sixties.

THIS DEVELOPMENT has been chronicled in Reyner Banham's new book on megastructures.[1] Banham takes as his starting point Fimihiko Maki's definition of megastructure (1964); "a large frame in which all the functions of a city or part of a city are housed"; or—in Banham's own words—"a permanent and dominating frame containing subordinate and transient accommodations." He goes on to identify two further ingredients: different rates of obsolescence in the different scales of structure, and the notions of flexibility, change and feed-back.

Banham traces the development of the movement in the work of several more or less self-

[1] *Megastructure: Urban Futures of the Recent Past.* By REYNER BANHAM. Thames & Hudson, £10.

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contained groups; the Japanese Metabolists, the French "Urbanisme Spatiale" group, the Italian "CittaTerritorio" group (Banham's own title) and the British Archigram. In discussing the (relatively few) projects where megastructural ideas have been realised he stresses the Montreal Expo of 1967, which was not only suffused with the general mega-spirit but which commissioned such megastructural prototypes as Guntis Plesum's "Theme Pavilion" and Moshe Safdie's "Habitat."

Though most architects know more or less what they mean by "megastructure" it becomes a somewhat slippery term as one tries to give it a precise definition, and in fact it is a fusion of several different trends. Banham has given it a wide definition—perhaps sometimes too wide. Projects such as the Chiesa Rossa scheme for Milan (1961) and the Quartiere Direzionale Scheme for Turin (1963) are really no more than large-scale planning schemes in which self-contained blocks are linked by a network of transport and service routes. They do not have (though in some ways they adumbrate) the essential megastructural properties of continuity, modular growth and evenness of texture, in which the old idea of the identity of form and function, symbolised in the *objet type*, is superseded by the random and non-hierarchical slotting of all functions into the same framework. There is also a distinction to be made between true megastructures and large building complexes such as Lasdun's University of East Anglia, in which a visual continuity conceals hierarchically arranged and static functional complexes.

BUT MANY MEGASTRUCTURES do have isolated blocks. How are they to be distinguished from more conventional schemes? This leads to a distinction between two basic types of megastructure—those in which the support structure is merely a sort of neutral grid, like the projects of Yona Friedman and Shadrach Woods' Free University of Berlin, and those in which the support structure is monumentalised, as with the Metabolists and Archigram. In these the individual buildings are not *objets types* but identical giant nodes, usually cylindrical. This type is often characterised by the selection of forms from a *catalogue imaginaire* of industrial ready-mades, and their use on a new scale and for a new purpose. The common ancestor of this transformation and ambiguity of scale and meaning is le Corbusier, though with him its incipient expressionism was controlled by rational analysis and formal composition, neither of which are present in megastructural design.

Banham makes the point that megastructural ideas were incipient in the modern movement from the outset. He is thorough in hunting down its antecedents, but there are some possible omissions. For instance, the concept of the infinite extension of an imaginary spatial grid, which belongs to both neo-plasticism and elementarism, and of which Frederick Kiesler's *cité dans l'espace* at the 1925 Paris exhibition was perhaps the definitive expression, was surely an important forerunner. And another source which Banham does not mention is Constructivism, with its semantic stress on the structural and material fabric of the building—on the rhetoric of process; the chemical factory by a student in Ladovsky's atelier (1922), with its diagonal lattice enclosing huge cylindrical containers, seems to anticipate, on the level of expression, the entire Archigram *oeuvre*. But it would be only too easy to extend the provenance of the megastructure idea since it belongs to the whole history of architecture. At an aesthetic level the superimposition of two structural orders is a characteristic of post-Renaissance architecture; while at the level of social content, its development within the modern movement, especially in le Corbusier, certainly owes something to the Furierist tradition, if not specifically to the 19th-century architect Alessandro Antonelli, whose condominium apartments in Turin anticipated Harbraken's "support structure" thesis by half a century. But in spite of such arguable omissions, Banham's book is an important extension of his work as instant historian of the modern movement.

In this role he is bound to be overtaken by events, and the sub-title of the book testifies the fact that he is conscious of recording a dead movement. He rationalises its demise in terms of his previously well-publicised scepticism about the role of the architect in modern society, and sees the megastructure movement as a last desperate bid by architects for world power. But Banham's attitude towards architects has always been equivocal, and, to balance the account, there is a noticeable softening in his attitude to the "cultural baggage" which he so summarily dismissed in *Theory and Design*.[2] This can be seen in his remarks concerning Patrick Hodgkinson's Brunswick Centre project (a very marginal megastructure):

> . . . such professionalism and an almost old-fashioned learning is not, in retrospect, to be despised. This is not the only building which can be said to have been saved by old-time architectural skills in composition and design from the kind of cheerless chaos that inflicted so much of the less determined "megastructure" housing of that period in England.

But he manages to include these caveats

[2] *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age* (1960).

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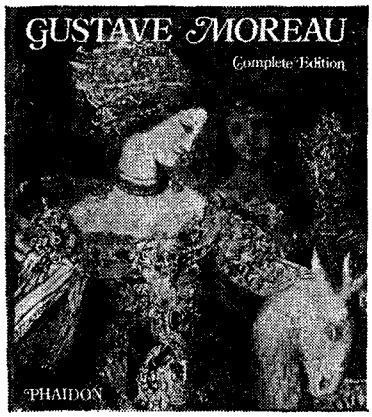

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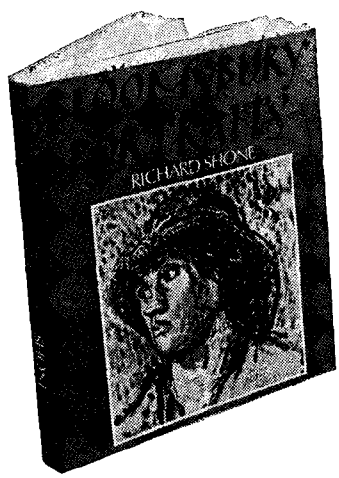

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without giving the book an air of compromise or loss of faith. While cutting megastructures down to size, he still manages to convey the excitement of a movement which, dead or not, has permanently changed the face of modern architecture.

Banham could, however, be criticised for too easily accepting the megastructuralists' own tendency to emphasise the iconographic aspects of architecture at the expense of its social or technical reality. He does make some passing criticisms of the frequent gap in megastructural schemes between technical feasibility and aesthetic image (very apparent in the *Plateau Banbourg* scheme in Paris), but he does not attempt a thoroughgoing critique. He seems to accept the movement as a transitory fashion and fails to explain its rapid loss of impetus, or to demonstrate in what way its ideas might still be valid—even though its application might result in forms which were different from those of the 1960s.

THE REACTION against megastructures which has taken place in recent years is part of a more general reaction against the modern movement as a whole. This is exemplified in Brent C. Brolin's book *The Failure of Modern Architecture*,[3] which is a compendium of popular conceptions (and misconceptions) of the modern movement. Brolin's main theme is that the inspiration of the modern movement came largely from an outmoded 19th-century positivism. He says, correctly, that while modern architecture claimed to be offering "functional" design, it was in fact a preference for a certain architectural style. But he does not give an adequate analysis of the intentions and meanings of this style. He criticises the modern movement for its puritanical attitude towards 19th-century ornament, but he himself is equally puritanical about a style which represents and embodies a certain attitude towards modern society. Like many self-styled populists, he unintentionally allies himself to historical determinism, because he fails to see that all style is arbitrary and rule-governed, and wants to replace the modern "style" with a "natural" and popular architecture.

Brolin's analysis of the 19th century takes little account of its ideological framework. He selects different aspects of 19th-century capitalism and treats them sometimes as virtues (the love of ornament) and sometimes as sins (the maximum return on minimum investment), apparently without realising that these are two aspects of the same ethos. Many of Brolin's criticisms of modern architecture are justified if taken in isolation. But the total rejection of it as a homogeneous movement which he proposes would involve him in a much more radical view of its alternatives than he is prepared to accept. One such alternative seems to him to lie in the work of Robert Venturi; but Venturi's work fits quite comfortably into the framework of the modern movement and the "naïve observer" would probably find it difficult to distinguish it from the other products of modern architecture which it is supposed to contradict.

Radical critics of modern architecture may perhaps be divided into "intellectual humanists" and "grass-roots humanists." The bracketing of these two together should not obscure the fact that intellectual humanists often have more in common with their functionalist adversaries than with their ostensible allies. This becomes clear if we compare their respective interpretations of the word "humanist"—in the first case etymologically rooted in the Renaissance, and in the second case floating vaguely in the liberal regions of 20th-century deism. This distinction is related to the more general conflict between classicism and romanticism, rationalism and pragmatism—a conflict which is nowadays often oversimplified into that between "élitism" and "populism."

IF BROLIN COULD PERHAPS be called a "grass-roots humanist" Joseph Rykwert is a humanist with more claim to the term. His book *The Idea of a Town*[4] is also, in a sense, an attack on some of the assumptions of modern architecture, but it is an attack at once more profound and more oblique than Brolin's. Whereas Brolin's idea of a "humane architecture" would be based on explicit, pragmatic "wants" and on an aesthetics of sensation, Rykwert would see it as having to fulfil man's ageless psychological needs—needs which are not immediately given, since all the conditions of modern life conspire to conceal them, just as the conscious, rationalising mind of psychoanalytical theory conceals the unconscious drives which underlie it. According to modern planning concepts, the town is purely economic and instrumental—it has no fixed dimensions and is usually thought of in terms of biological growth. "But the town is not really like a natural phenomenon . . . if it is related to physiology at all, it is more like a dream than anything else."

Rykwert's main thesis is that, in building houses and towns, men are re-enacting a ritual which derives from the fundamental and irrevocable

[3] *The Failure of Modern Architecture*. By BRENT C. BROLIN. Studio Vista, £6.

[4] *The Idea of a Town*. By JOSEPH RYKWERT. Faber & Faber, £14.

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split between nature and culture. This is not a new thesis—it is, for example, one of the main ideas in the books of Mircea Eliade—but in this book it is supported by an unusual and fascinating wealth of anthropological material, drawn chiefly from the Mediterranean civilisations, but also from the East and the tribal societies of Africa and America. According to Rykwert, what Etruscan and Roman towns shared with the whole ancient and "primitive" world were:

> (*1*) Acting out, at the founding of any settlement, a dramatic show of the creation of the world; (*2*) the incarnation of that drama in the plan of the settlement, as well as in its social and religious institutions; (*3*) the achievement of this second aim by the alignment of its axes with those of the universe; and (*4*) the rehearsal of the foundation cosmogony in regular festivals, and its commemoration in monuments.

The essence of these acts, Rykwert says, "is to reconcile man to his fate through monument and ritual activity."

Underlying Rykwert's thesis is the notion that all form has symbolic meaning. Classical and post-classical interpretations of axial and orthogonal street layouts as practical recipes were always post-rationalisations of deeper layers of meaning revealed in religious and folk traditions. Such a point of view is antipathetic to the theory of cultural diffusion and, in discussing the adoption of such plans by the Etruscans, Rykwert says; "The orthogonal plan and the matter of orientation were too important in the life of a people to have been taken over arbitrarily. . . . They must have had a context in the general world picture of the Etruscan into which they might fit." Rykwert, of course, does not argue that practical considerations were not important; his point is that pragmatic and cosmological notions were unified in a total world view. Thus Hippodamus, who is credited (probably erroneously) with being the founder of the orthogonal city, was not just a chartered surveyor *avant la lettre* but a philosopher whose thought "does not separate out physical space, political space, urban space, but unifies them in one speculative exertion" (J. P. Vernant, as quoted by Rykwert).

Though some scholars, particularly British ones with empiricist leanings, will no doubt have their reservations about Rykwert's hypothesis, his view is supported by much recent philosophical and anthropological theory, and when it is a question of interpreting the ancient and primitive world and of redressing the balance of 19th-century positivism, it seems completely convincing. But Rykwert's purpose is not just historical and descriptive. As an architect and a theorist he is concerned with using the findings of anthropology to build a prescriptive model which can be applied to the present day, and here his thesis is both more urgent and more problematic—though in justice to Rykwert it must be said that he acknowledges the immense difficulty of making a transition from the ancient to the modern world, and makes no claims to a solution.

If we accept the Lévi-Straussian view that myths are empty structures of which the latest "rational" explanation must be considered simply as a further elaboration (Marx or Freud), there seems almost no end to the social transformations that can legitimately "stand in" for the original mythic content. But if, with phenomenologists like Paul Ricoeur, we believe that the content of myths is archetypical (and Rykwert seems to incline to this view) we must interpret many aspects of modern social life as pathological and seek to recover a world of meaning which the modern world has distorted. As Rykwert points out, the modern city is an infinitely more complex physical and social mechanism than the ancient. This increase in mechanical complexity is balanced by a proportional loss of symbolic meaning both in the city as a whole and in its parts. Whereas in the ancient city the private fantasies of its inhabitants were hypostasised in its physical and social structure and in collective myths and rituals, today, whatever our perennial psychological needs, they do not find collective and physical expression. The social realm is interpreted as the sum total of a number of private or family transactions. Can this situation be altered by manipulating the aesthetic and physical structure of the city; or is the structure itself the result of more profound social laws? Rykwert does not answer this question, nor does he say whether he considers it feasible or desirable to design entire cities according to new principles, or whether architecture can now only play an indirect, exemplary role in a "virtual city" space . . . .

THE PROBLEM OF THE modern city revolves round two polar models, called by James Bird[5] "*disjointed incrementalism*, and *goal* orientation." The megastructure idea is a projection of the first. It denies the need for the formal representation of the city as an idea, and sees it as the sum total of an infinite number of individual "freedoms." The city emerges as a functional organisation which is self-regulating, needs no image of itself, and has no centre or limits. The idea of the city put forward by Rykwert is the exact opposite. The city is thought

[5] *Centrality and Cities*. By JAMES BIRD. Routledge Direct Editions, £3.95.

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of as an intentional representation of man in the cosmos. It has a "meaning", not so much in terms of its function as in terms of cosmology; it is discrete and has both centre and boundaries. (The megastructural city is not of course without an image, but its image is "natural" and aesthetic. In the ancient city, the physical form was the structural analogue of certain concepts.) In *Centrality and Cities*[5] Bird tries to understand the relation between these two contradictory concepts and to reconcile them. As a geographer and a "scientist" he is concerned with avoiding *a priori* judgments; but he is aware that, if it wants to understand the whole world, science must take into account human disposition and must therefore absorb the subjective. His approach depends a great deal on both structuralism and Popper's hypothetico-deductive model on the one hand, and information theory and gestalt psychology on the other—though he also has brief flirtations with Teilhard de Chardin and Arthur Koestler.

In these terms he sees "centrality" as part of the fundamental structure of the human mind and to depend on the fact that meaning resides, not in objects, but in their relationship, and in an ability to distinguish between dissimilar things. His final conclusion is that cities depend on a compromise between an order and centrality which is too obvious, and a dispersion which is disquieting. In reading his book, with its scissors-and-paste assembly of innumerable authorities, one is led to the conclusion that it lacks a strong concept which could unify, at a higher level, the mass of data which he adduces, and which alone would justify his syncretic approach. Such a concept might, for instance, depend on a greater awareness of history, as a result of which it would become clear that the necessary compromise between order and disorder, confirmation and surprise, contains elements of 18th- and 19th-century picturesque theory—what Manfredo Tafuri has called the assimilation of the city with nature.[6] What appears to Bird as a fundamental human disposition may be an historical phenomenon, and its explanation would then depend on a theory of ideology. He does not, for instance, once mention the mnemonic function of cities—a function which is denied by the megastructural city, with its biological metaphors and its orientation towards an unknown future, but which is fundamental if we are to understand Rykwert's conception of myth and monument. The function of memory can be seen under two aspects, that of individual psychology and that of social transmission, and both are relevant to a discussion of buildings and towns.

[6] Manfredo Tafuri, *Architecture and Utopia* (M.I.T. 1976).

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A basic fact of existing cities, and one which still accounts for their "readability", is eclecticism; the simultaneous existence and interpretation of different past styles. Ever since the end of the 18th century, and until the onset of the modern movement, eclecticism was the accepted way in which memory played its part in the city. The new and rapidly proliferating building types of the 19th century were able to be absorbed into the city as a representational system only by being annexed to one or other of the "styles." The concept of "style" and that of "type" were, therefore, the corollaries of an eclectic architecture.

THE REALISATION that memory plays an essential part in the assignation of meaning to architecture has led some contemporary architects to a new awareness of "typology"—of the need for some kind of taxonomy by which the architectural system can be broken down into recognisable and memorable parts. This has resulted in a new interest in the architectural theories of the early 19th century which tried to classify architecture into its natural "types" or species on the analogy of botany or zoology. On the face of it Dr Pevsner's book *A History of Building Types*[7] might seem to be a response to such an interest. But it is soon apparent that this is not the case. In his brief introduction Pevsner makes no attempt to establish a theoretical framework for his study. He puts forward no theory of types, nor does he relate his study of types to any historical tradition. He simply accepts "typology" as found in the 19th century and uses its methods to guide us through architectural history. This *ad hoc* procedure allows him to omit churches and houses from his book on the grounds that they have been adequately covered elsewhere, and thus makes impossible any systematic or comprehensive analysis of the relation of style to building type.

Pevsner's method is similar to the one adopted in his survey of the English counties. But what was suitable for a guide book is inappropriate for an architectural history. We are presented with a mass of historical information, at different levels of relevance, written in a breathless and verbless style. But great care has been taken over the selection of plans and photographs, and these alone make the book a valuable record of the main post-Renaissance building types and their historical development.

Pevsner's only excursion into theory comes in the concluding chapter. The theory concerns eclecticism (which Pevsner always calls historicism—a

[7] *A History of Building Types*. By NIKOLAUS PEVSNER. Thames & Hudson, £16.

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word which, confusingly, has an opposite meaning in Hegelian exegesis). His tentative explanation of eclecticism is that "every building creates associations in the mind of the beholder, whether the architect wanted it or not." But if these associations occur in any case, the fact that the architect wanted it takes on only a relative importance. Meanings in architecture are social; as such they will sometimes be conscious and sometimes unconscious; and they are not stable. To say, as he does in the next paragraph, that "the greatness of the Crystal Palace was that there was nothing it could evoke" is therefore meaningless. Contemporary literature shows that the Crystal Palace evoked many ideas, and though these were not the kind normally associated with architecture, they were invariably thought of in relation to architecture. Pevsner then goes on to ask the question "what point does evocation play in the anti-period style of the 20th century? . . . we have to rely on more direct evocation. But can we? Can we trust our own evocation as valid for others?"

This is an important question because it goes to the root of the conflict between the structuralist and semiological view of artistic meaning, held, for example, by E. H. Gombrich and the expression theory of modern art and architecture, according to which a building "expresses" its essence by the fact of its functionality. It is also important because it is the first time that Pevsner has acknowledged the problem of meaning in architecture.

Pevsner answers his own question in the affirmative, and claims that universal meanings do lie in architectural forms *per se*, that ". . . international modern . . . conveys clarity, precision, technological daring and a total denial of superfluity, but it also conveys neutrality." Put in other terms this last phrase means "the intentional meaning of a building is that it has no meaning." But for lack of meaning to be able to take on a positive signification, buildings displaying this quality had to be read against the mass of conventional buildings which formed their context (mental or physical). Similarly, those "aggressive" and "cyclopean" qualities which Pevsner disapproves of in the late work of le Corbusier and his imitators only take on their full meaning within the context of the conventions set up in the early modern movement and in the earlier conventions of post-Renaissance architecture. To fix on one set of meanings and to attribute to them a sort of objective historical necessity is a dubious procedure. And by dealing with architectural history not as an evolutionary sequence of styles but as a panorama in which style and meaning are affixed, as a matter of convention, to certain building types, Pevsner seems to have

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A study in words and pictures of the baroque architecture of Prague: Pavlik is a senior architect in the State Institute for the Reconstruction of Historic Towns and Monuments, Prague; and Uher is head of the Institute's photographic department. The book includes 117 full-page black and white photographs.

March 31 170 *pp* 280 *mm* × 315 *mm* £9.75

St. James Press

3 Percy Street, London W1P 9FA

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taken the ground from under his own theory of direct and unambiguous expression.

But a demonstration of the weakness of the the functionalist/Zeitgeist position adopted by Pevsner does not altogether dissolve the problem of the two aesthetic theories—one based on a social and contextual interpretation of art, the other on its natural expressiveness. The functionalists were trying to revive the Renaissance certainties and in that sense are close to Rykwert's archetypal scheme. Semiotics and structuralism, on the contrary, are the product of the disintegration of the Renaissance world which started in the 17th century, and received its first formulations in the 18th. The position seems similar to the conflict between Newtonian and Einsteinian physics. At the everyday level the former still operates, while its explanatory power has been taken over by the latter. Similarly, in architecture designers tend to work as if there were a natural bond between function and expression, form and meaning; while to understand the way architecture works on a historical scale, it is necessary to be a "relativist" and to concede that the relation between form and meaning is conventional and arbitrary.

Art & Craft

Views of Art History—By MICHAEL PODRO

PROFESSOR PETER GAY'S *Art and Act*[1] is a bold and polemical book. It challenges the reader in three distinct ways: first of all it is meant to demonstrate a general theory of historical writing; secondly, it gives a social and psychoanalytic study of three men—Manet, Gropius and Mondrian; and thirdly, it is in some sense an account of the relation of each to his art.

Professor Gay believes that it is incumbent upon the real historian to decide which of the numerous causes of an event is to be regarded as pre-eminent or most important. He rejects as evasive subjectivism the view that the pre-eminence of one cause over others depends upon the viewpoint of the historian, and sets out to show the force of his general view of historical explanation by one which is more specific. The more specific thesis is that we can distinguish between three kinds of cause in works of art: the first is the impact of the surrounding culture on the artist, the second is his craft, and the third is his personal psychological constitution. For different artists, different causes are dominant. Manet exemplifies the dominance of the first, Gropius of the second, and Mondrian of the third.

The first problem which this raises is how we can assess, for instance in the case of Manet, the relative dominance of personal urgency or cultural impact. What scales will weigh one against the other? We might at first think that even if we could not answer this question, we could at least compare the balance between private and cultural causes within the work of two artists and so reach a comparative judgment. But, if we have no way of comparing the two factors in the case of Manet, how can we say that the balance for him was different to the balance for Mondrian? Yet surely Professor Gay is pointing at something. Is it, perhaps, that Manet's painting as part of its content contains more of the surrounding culture, more of the social fabric than is encompassed by Mondrian? If this is at least part of what Professor Gay is pointing to, then surely he is not really talking about causes and effects, but about conditions and responses to them, or conditions and reflections upon them.

But judgments and paintings do not stand to their objects and conditions as effects stand to causes, or not only as effects stand to causes. We can make this clear if we look at two attempts by the same artist to draw the same figure, or design the same composition. The alterations, self-corrections, adjustments and economies he is able to make as he reworks his drawings are made presumably subject to the same causal conditions as his initial formulation, with one exception: the changed condition generated from within his own activity of formulating. The reason why thought, argument, and painting are believed to exhibit freedom is that an essential part of their "causation" lies within the activities themselves. And it is not only the development of an individual argument or painting which is obscured by talking in terms of cause and effect but the way a writer or painter is able to reflect on his personal situation, to follow and redefine his interests and involvements.

This apparent reduction of a work of art to

[1] *Art and Act: On Causes in History—Manet, Gropius, Mondrian.* By PETER GAY. Harper & Row, $15.00, £9.75.

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an effect is perhaps connected with another feature of Professor Gay's thought. He explicitly separates the questioning of the historian from the appreciation of the critic:

> The historian does not render critics redundant; his most exhaustive and most satisfactory causal explanation remains mute on aesthetic properties, let alone the aesthetic value, of a landscape or a symphony. But I am not addressing myself to art as an aesthetic object. I propose to deal with art as a piece of history.

This suggests that Professor Gay envisages something behind or beyond the work in so far as the work is discussed historically: an aesthetic ghost in the machine of causation. Does this mean that Professor Gay can gather everything he needs as historian without going through the painting—that is without appreciating it as a painting? That is, does Professor Gay assume that the information needed for historical enquiry about men as artists can be derived without a critical understanding of their works of art or works of a particular art? This division between the historical account of a work and its aesthetic properties seems to mean that Professor Gay has not been talking about the work of art at all.

The tension between the critical interest in art and history has in the past taken two dominant forms. For Vasari, Winckelmann and then Ruskin there was an insistence on the need for the relevance of historical information to artistic achievement. Winckelmann can be left to speak for this position:

> In treatises upon art, learning should constitute the least part; for where it teaches us nothing essential, it should be valued at nothing. . . . He who seeks to penetrate into the reality of knowledge has to guard no less against the danger of becoming a man of letters than what is commonly understood by the term antiquarian.

The second form of this dichotomy of art and history—a post-Kantian form—was to regard the artistic achievement as essentially self-revealing (given the appropriate aesthetic viewpoint) with historical material like the iconography and practical purposes of a work as ancillary. The free activity of the artist was regarded as itself a matter of overcoming mere external function, mere pre-existent subject matter, and in some cases mere craft. Artistic achievement was conceived in terms of formal order or formal expressiveness. Once the work of art or its tradition had been thus isolated, the problem of putting the historical material back into the mixture became insoluble. Professor Gay has, it seems, accepted this isolationist view of art history and refrained from penetrating the formal

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or aesthetic values. But if you take this view, then Winckelmann's demand for the relevance of historical information to the works themselves becomes unanswerable. Either you regard the aesthetic interest or artistic achievement as open to your general historical inquiry or you regard it as outside historical inquiry. Professor Gay has taken the second course and the consequence is that what he provides is a psychoanalytic study of the personality of the artists, and an examination (in the case of Gropius a very valuable examination) of the social involvements of the artists, but not an account of their work.

One way in which this division in Professor Gay's thought makes itself felt is in his conception of the artist's "craft." In his scheme this is one of the causal factors of an artist's work. But how are we to understand "craft"? One indication of this is in the case of Gropius's architecture, where the craft seems equivalent to an engineer's solution to a practical problem and is distinguished from aesthetic purpose. This would follow the underlying distinction between historical causes and aesthetic qualities. But it is surely a characteristic of our understanding of the arts that the artist's skill or craft is not divided from his sensitivity. It is precisely that skill is exercised in a way which evaluates and illuminates its material or subject matter or function that characterises something as an art.

What of Professor Gay's more general polemical purpose: his concern to reject subjectivism and insist that the historian must try to establish an objective hierarchy of causes for what he wants to understand? There seems some difficulty with this thesis, as historians may be puzzled by quite different aspects of the same historical event. And in so far as they ask different questions, different features will be salient and different causes will be sought. Historical inquiry is relative to the information already possessed by the historian and to the analogies or models he may find suggestive. But *this* does not make history subjective. For this would make physics subjective too. This provides a ground for caution in accepting any one hierarchy of causes for a particular event; an historian's hierarchy will surely depend on what he in fact makes focal, on the question he asks. But behind Professor Gay's argument lies a real moral urgency: an insistence that in the history of human actions some factors are more important than others. Perhaps we can hold on to this sense of hierarchy by distinguishing between serious and frivolous, honest and dishonest historical questioning.

THAT THE HISTORICAL STUDY of art should be directed at the artist's skills and that the skills contain within themselves the values of art is one way of characterising a central theme in the writing of Sir Ernst Gombrich. *The Heritage of Apelles*[2] which appeared recently is the third volume of his papers on the art of the Renaissance, and in it the artist's rationality is a consistent theme. In the fineness of its descriptions and observation, this is perhaps the most elegant and personal of the three Renaissance volumes. His power of demonstrating things before our very eyes is at its height.

The first papers are concerned with the distinction between the illumination of objects which brings out the modelling of forms, the "reception of light" as we find it in the paintings of Giotto and Masaccio, and the illumination which is reflected, the lustre that reveals texture, which we find exploited in northern Renaissance art, particularly by van Eyck. Gombrich reconstructs the evidence for the view that Apelles, the Greek painter of the age of Alexander, was able to distinguish and control both kinds of effect in his painting. The hypothesis would give point to texts which are otherwise puzzling, but as there are no paintings by Apelles left, this has to be developed by looking at the decorative art, fresco and mosaic, which is assumed to derive its skills from the major painters of antiquity. The idea of Apelles gives focus to an extraordinarily delicate search of antique and later works for the control of these kinds of illumination. Without such a compelling interest in the painter's skill, our skill as spectators could not be raised to the exactness which Gombrich achieves. He then follows the fate of this distinction between illumination and lustre as the two kinds of light become conflated in medieval conventions of rocks, architecture and heads.

This study of illumination and nearly all the other papers in the volume gain their focus and point as evidence for a central thesis most fully developed in *Art and Illusion*: that the power to produce recognition of natural appearance in painting was a gradually learned control over visual cues, a rational and self-critical achievement. This concentration has brought a confused area of art history under cultivation, but it has also set up a problem: how is this control of recognisability linked to other aspects of the painter's art? After all, would Apelles's skills of illumination have provided credentials for getting artists back into Plato's Republic?

Several related answers to this challenge can be drawn from the present volume. The first is that control over the cues of visual recognition was itself a form of rationality, for it involved the painter overcoming his assumptions, testing the

[2] *The Heritage of Apelles: Studies in the Art of the Renaissance*. By E. H. GOMBRICH. Phaidon, £9.95.

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marks he puts down against a rational standard, the standard of natural appearances. But what, someone might ask, is to prevent the artist checking his drawing against natural appearances and adjusting it? Where is the difficulty? In *Art and Illusion* Gombrich showed as a matter of fact just how tightly artists did hold on to procedures learned from earlier models, and in a short passage of a paper in this volume he seems to push the insight further. He cites Dürer commenting on his contemporary German artists who are, says Dürer, *blind* to the deficiencies of their own depictions. They are unable to subject their drawings to the fresh evidence of natural appearances. One way in which we might put this is that these artists make the mental adjustment in accepting that a drawing will never be quite like reality, and they make the adjustment all too completely. It is breaking the spell of one's own adjustment to the limitations of one's own drawing that is so difficult, it is this that requires the critical energy and the habit of criticism.

But Gombrich clearly feels that this does not do justice to the scope and interest of Renaissance paintings or even that it properly describes how any Renaissance painter would have understood his own activity. He takes it to be the view of Vasari that there was a further objective of the painter which was dramatic evocation, and that the two factors, the development of representational skill on the one hand and dramatic evocation on the other were related in Renaissance painting as means to ends.

Put like this the view presents a certain difficulty: it seems to make the technique of representation simply extrinsic to the dramatic interest, merely a way of relaying the dramatic event to us. This would certainly be to misread Vasari, whose sense of representational skills is permeated by metaphors suggesting the skills themselves have a dramatic or expressive force. Correspondingly, Gombrich's view of dramatic purpose must be seen as reaching down into the procedures of drawing the figure.

PERHAPS THE MOST COMPLETE interplay of literary meaning and visual sensitivity we could experience is in Botticelli's illustrations of the Divine Comedy. Vasari went so far as to say that Botticelli wrote a commentary on the poem. Perhaps it is literally true and current scepticism misplaced, for Botticelli makes the finest nuance of drawing respond to Dante's similes and leaves one suspended between drawing and poem without any sense of distraction.

The drawings provide one of the most controlled pieces of evidence from the late 15th century of artistic self-consciousness in the positive rather than the disabling sense. Here we see Botticelli deliberately choosing one mode of drawing rather than another for its expressive or metaphorical force. The drawings are dispersed on the sheets without the constraints of literal connection, constantly astonishing in their orientations, giving visual articulation to the most elusive and personal ideas.

A volume of large plates with the relevant passages of the *Commedia* translated on the opposite page has now been published.[3] I have never seen the original drawings, but the quality of reproduction seems very good and very much finer than any previous edition. There is a concise and suggestive introduction by Lord Clark, and the drawings are also discussed in a valuable short book on Botticelli by L. D. and Helen Ettlinger.[4]

A THIRD VOLUME of Rudolf Wittkower's collected essays, *Allegory and the Migration of Symbols*, has now been published.[5] In one paper, "The

[3] *The Drawings by Sandro Botticelli for Dante's Divine Comedy.* Introduced by KENNETH CLARK. Thames & Hudson, £35.00.

[4] *Botticelli.* By L. D. and HELEN ETTLINGER, Thames & Hudson, £4.50, paper £2.50.

[5] *Allegory and the Migration of Symbols.* By RUDOLF WITTKOWER. Thames & Hudson, £12.50.

Artists on Art

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Eagle and the Serpent", the appearance of the bird and snake in conflict is shown to be virtually universal, going back beyond the fourth millennium B.C. on Elamite pottery from Susa, on a Babylonian cylinder seal, and then on Indian jewellery, and it is found as far afield as Java and Mexico. Wittkower surveys an immense range of artefacts and legends in which it recurs. In doing so he explains what can be gathered of its meaning in different situations. No pressure is put on the evidence to insist on a pattern of development, to force the diffusionist case as opposed to the convergence of discrete sources. Nor are the parallels pressed to manifest some basic psychological origin. He simply remarks that such fights have been observed and that the sight must have made an indelible impression on the early imagination of man. Wittkower's focus is on passages of transmission and on how the conjunction of eagle and snake served as a symbol in different situations: the connotations of light and darkness, life and death are shown to gather round the conflict from a wide range of different sources —they are taken up in Christian symbolism, in which Christ may be identified with the Eagle and Satan with the Serpent, and still hovers over us in 19th-century symbols of empire.

In the next paper we meet figures with monstrously large ears and others with dog heads. They are on the 12th-century tympanum at Vézelay. It is not a joke but a symbol of strange peoples who will receive the word of Christ; the large ears and dog-headedness are derived from a Hellenistic tale about the inhabitants of India and these characteristics became representative of strange peoples, exemplifying the diversity of nations to which redemption is to come. These papers are based on observing similarities, asking about connections, and they push the questioning as far as the evidence itself makes the formulation of answerable questions possible: there is a sober discrimination between the cases where only broad remarks are possible and where meaning and transmission can be traced in fine detail.

An interest in symbols and the literary and visual transmission of them has sometimes been held to be a mere ancillary skill of the art historian or one which has to be assimilated to some deeper mental function. Clearly, questions about the transmission of themes or of representational skills are not the same questions as those about the interest or function of this or that particular work, but, quite simply, these two kinds of questions are reciprocally energising. It was a temptation to which Wittkower, unlike many others, never succumbed to make the transmission of symbols and the transformation of their meaning into the *purpose* of individual works of art.

Wittkower is not most readily associated with the topics that appear here, but with the history of Renaissance architecture and of 17th-century art. His range as a historian was clearly immense. The main papers in the new book come from the pre-war volumes of the *Journal of the Warburg Institute*. Those volumes are marked by the highly informative economical papers free of academic display, and that directness is also a characteristic of Wittkower's own intellectual style.

A particularly intricate field of the transmission of artistic culture is described in Professor Jan Bialostocki's *The Art of the Renaissance in Eastern Europe*.[6] The art is primarily architecture, and the countries concerned Hungary, Poland and Bohemia. The three most important centres of influence were Buda, Cracow and Prague. The nature of the transmission is first of all the importation of Italian architects and secondly the use by native architects of Italian motifs. The first major building was for Matthias Corvinus, King of Hungary at Buda in the second half of the 15th century. The castles, fountains, gardens and villas have been destroyed, and there remain only a few fragments of masonry and some of the manuscripts, now dispersed, which once belonged to this humanist's thousand-volume library.

The contact between Hungary and Italy was constant at the level of the court throughout the 15th century. To take two kinds of such contact, Masolino went to Hungary leaving Masaccio to get on with the Brancacci chapel, and Matthias Corvinus himself married the Neapolitan Beatrix of Aragon. But what was the effect of the importation of Italian artists and models? In Prague, the extraordinary work of Benedikt Ried, for instance, shows two characteristics: first, Italian motifs seem like strange pieces of architectural vocabulary and are re-used in a completely original way: in one instance rectangular columns flanking a doorway are twisted on their central axes through ninety degrees. Secondly, Ried was able to give a whole palace façade or a portico a Brunelleschian sense of order, while keeping his own sense of weight and spacing. The nearer his followers approached a Florentine original the deader they seemed to become.

In the third centre, Cracow, there is a grand courtyard with three storeys of arcading which is Italian in inspiration. The Italian conception is interestingly adapted to the great height of the building by use of double-length columns running along the top level. It is at its most

[6] *The Art of the Renaissance in Eastern Europe*. By Jan Bialostocki. Phaidon, £12.50.

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strictly Italian in the arches of the lower levels, but these are less eloquent than the distended "gothic" supports of the upper storey and the non-Italian way that sections of solid wall are interspersed between sections of arcading.

The problem of architectural tradition is present in a different way in the great Sigismond Chapel in Cracow (1517–33) designed by the Italian Bartolommeo Berecci. It seems from photographs in this book magnificent, but how are we to look at its modification of Italian rules: as something an Italian might have done at home? Against what background, physical and mental, should we be looking at such a monument? Does it relate to a local tradition as well as an Italian one? What kind of craftsmen were employed and how strange were the demands put on them, and how far did their procedures transform the final building? To ask these questions is not an adverse criticism of Professor Bialostocki's very fine book: it simply registers a sense that the search for Italian influence is an oblique view across the architecture of eastern Europe.

Lawless Ornament & Fruitful Irresponsibility

Decorative Arts—By BEVIS HILLIER

THE TERMS "decorative arts" and "applied arts" were both outlawed, or at least put in quarantine, in the Bauhaus-besotted 1920s. They both seemed to imply something extraneous, non-integral, unfunctional. But just as *démodé* political concepts get rehabilitated, "decorative art" is once again beginning to be accepted as valid in its own right.

There has been a revulsion (by the public—not yet, alas, by the practitioners) against baldly functional architecture—what Corbusier approvingly called "architectural nudism." This revulsion is seen at its most eloquent in the writings of the foremost American historian of Art Deco architecture, David Gebhard. In his monograph (written with Harriette von Breton in 1969) on the Californian architect Kem Weber, Gebhard wrote:

> Fortunately that which became vital in the late '50s and early '60s—namely "Pop" and an admiration for the commercial vernacular—has at least partially freed us from the moral restraint of the International Style and its ideology of functional moralism.

Gebhard's own book on the prodigally eclectic Richfield Building, Los Angeles (built 1928, demolished 1968), was a hymn in praise of uninhibited "decorative art."

Perhaps Dr and Miss Robertson's book on *Cast Iron Decoration* and Geoffrey Beard's on *Decorative Plasterwork* may be seen as part of the same rekindling admiration for decoration *per se;* for it would be difficult to think of any two forms of applied art which have less "organic significance" in a building, less functional purpose. No house has an absolute need of cast-iron gates, balconies, balustrades, porches or torch-bearers. Neither does it collapse about the ears of its owner if there are no moulded pomegranates on the ceiling in plaster, strapwork cartouches, grotesqueries, nautical motifs or symbols copied from plates in Henry Peacham's *Minerva Britannia*, 1612. Both art forms give a chance for lawless ornament and fruitful irresponsibility. Yet both flourished in the period when lawlessness and irresponsibility were least approved—the frigid period of Neo-Classicism. Yes, frigid: in spite of all the efforts of Hugh Honour and the Victoria and Albert Museum's exhibition to make us fall in love with it.

Of course where artistic frigidity is in place is precisely in architecture: we want our buildings to be just standing around, elegantly dressed perhaps, but not yelling Indian love-calls at us. Neo-classicism was as unnatural in canvas paintings (by Mengs, David and so on) as cubism —which also has *its* decorative place, in wallpapers and linoleum.

CAST IRON DECORATION[1] IS A magnificent pictorial essay, very well designed and printed by Thames & Hudson. The writing is

[1] *Cast Iron Decoration*. By E. GRAEME ROBERTSON and JOAN ROBERTSON. Thames & Hudson, £14.00.

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not distinguished and there are irritating passages of propaganda for the preservation of cast iron, which surely nobody who buys this book for £14 will need much convincing about. But it is well researched. The late Dr E. Graeme Robertson was an Australian neurologist, a consultant to four Melbourne hospitals. His hobbies were photography (in which he was masterly), antiques, and Australiana. His daughter, who helped him with this book, has also been in the Australian medical world. There may be some who will complain about the odd imbalance of the book in favour of Australian ironwork. I am sure it worried the publishers a lot, and I can hear an urbane publisher's voice murmuring, "Can't you make it a really *international* survey?" So some countries have been dragged in by the scruff of their iron railings and get pretty desultory treatment; one detects an almost desperate note in the Robertsons' breakdown of the Tahitian heritage of ironwork: "The letter-boxes on the island are of the standard French wall-mounted type, bearing the initials 'RF' for République Française, and were certainly cast in France." But for reasons I will explain, I think the Australian section of the book is by far the best, with the USA section as a close runner-up.

When I said that cast ironwork fell into the period of neo-classicism, I was speaking as someone most familiar with English, Scottish and Irish ironwork. All these are well represented in the Robertsons' text, with good passages on Adam and Nash architecture and the predominantly Regency towns of England such as Brighton, Cheltenham and Leamington Spa. The authors show how pattern books, such as those of L. N. Cottingham (*The Ornamental Metal Workers' Directory*, 1823), influenced design in many districts. The effects of the Industrial Revolution are also given some space, with the great Coalbrookdale Foundry and the Carron Company, though the Robertsons very much stick to their aesthetic subject and do not discuss the industrial or socio-economic background to any extent.

But Britain had both its neo-classicism and its Industrial Revolution early. The great period of cast iron in Australia and America was from the mid-19th century onwards, and in both places, particularly in Australia, an indigenous style developed far different from the cold elegancies of Adam and Nash architecture. Climatic conditions account for some of the differences, for example, the popularity of the verandah in America. The catalogue of the *Iron Manufactures of the New York Wire Railing Company* (1857) contains this lyrical passage:

> *Verandahs* are portions of a country house which cannot be dispensed with, nor are they to be overlooked in preparing plans for City and Suburban residences. In one of these delightful shelters there is a sense of enjoyment to be found that can be had nowhere else. In a Country-seat especially are they needed. Through them comes the view of pleasant twilights, and the evening breezes blow sweetly among the climbing plants that cover them. Walls are hot, and fresh air is wanted under all circumstances. The Iron Verandah offers advantages which no other material can possibly furnish. Its graceful and open fabric lends ornament to the dwelling, it permits a consultation of all tasks, it impedes no current of air, and is at once substantial and elegant.

How important the outdoor ironwork balconies were in the life of 19th-century New Orleans is suggested by Julian Ralph's *Dixie, or Southern Scenes and Sketches*:

> . . . when I rode through the Garden District—the new part of the town—my lady friends pointed to the galleries and said; "You should see them in the summer, before the people leave or after they come back. The entire population is out-of-doors in the air, and the galleries are loaded with women in soft colours, mainly white. . . ."

One of these houses in the Garden District of New Orleans makes to my mind the most captivating picture in the book—No 1315 First Street, built about 1870 with a complete ironwork

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front with slender columns and between them a delicate filigree of ironwork.

IT IS NOT ONLY that Melbourne is their home territory that makes the Australian section the best in the Robertsons' book. It is the chance to see a style of ironwork so different from our own ultra-restrained version as to seem exotic. The Australians drew on their own flora and fauna for inspiration and did not just depend on the interminable anthemions and acanthus leaves which Adam took from the Classical repertory of design. There was a craze for ferns (and cast iron ferneries) in Australia and some of the fern fronds represented in unquivering cast iron are "recognizably Australian." A remarkable hall-stand the Robertsons are proud to have found is decorated with kookaburras, emus, kangaroos and aborigines, fitted for propriety with banana leaves.

Although the Robertsons shy away from the social aspects of cast iron in Britain, they give fascinating details in the pages on Australia of the pre-fab "portable" houses brought out from England in the pioneer days. Not only "cottages for the million" were exported from England, but an iron parsonage-house ordered by the Bishop of Melbourne and an iron theatre in which G. V. Brooke, the tragedian, was to perform in the principal Australian towns (the Australians called it "the Iron Pot"). There were some problems with these pre-fabs. The manufacturers did not always send detailed advice on construction with the packing-cases full of iron parts, and the Australians had difficulty in solving the jig-saw puzzle. In the scorching sun the smaller cottages became hot as ovens, and many were soon dismantled and towed away by Antipodean Steptoes. But the grander feats of iron architecture in Australia are very grand indeed: for example, the terraces of the Sydney district known by the music-hall name of Woolloomooloo, or the great mansion of Illawarra, built in Melbourne in 1889 for Charles Henry James (perhaps an ancestor of Clive?).

THE ROBERTSONS' BOOK shows how an undistinguished text and an imbalance of treatment can be compensated by superb illustration, design and production. By contrast, Geoffrey Beard's *Decorative Plasterwork in Great Britain*[2] shows how a text of great distinction and fine historical balance can be marred by a cramped production (the smallness of the type makes reading it something of a penance).

[2] *Decorative Plasterwork in Great Britain.* By GEOFFREY BEARD. Phaidon, £8.50.

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The author apologises that it has not been possible to allocate to the subject the vast number of photographs which Laurence Turner used in his *Country Life* book on plasterwork in 1927. Well, of course, times have changed; but as the book was published with the help of a grant from the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, perhaps the Phaidon Press might have been more generous in the picture and space allowance. This pinched production detracts from the great reputation they built up in the 1950s. The Procrustean bed which Mr Beard has been offered also means that he has had to exclude many plasterers' names in his files, and as he ruefully but uncomplainingly adds, "A dictionary of craftsmen *is* needed."

Even so, the book is a valuable addition to the growing literature on the social history of the decorative arts. This is another aspect to our changing attitude to "decorative arts": we want to know more about patrons as well as aesthetics—more about who ate off the china, not the source-book of the flowers painted upon it; more about the way craftsmen were recruited for plastering ceilings. Unlike the Robertsons, Geoffrey Beard is prepared to grapple with the social issues—for example, the changes in English domestic architecture, the alterations in the whole function and character of the English country house in the century between Ben Jonson and Alexander Pope. On the first page he mentions Wollaton, Nottinghamshire (1588), built by the Willoughby family. This was the house on which Sir Joseph Paxton modelled Mentmore Towers, of present notoriety, almost exactly three centuries later. Sir John Summerson has described it as "an extravaganza", "an exceedingly pretentious palace" and "an inflated bauble, an architectural symbol rather than a house." But this was a mansion designed for the reception of Queen Elizabeth, deliberately striking in effect. Beard shows the gradual change in the status of the English country house, from a place of business as well as pleasure, to a place of relaxation from town and court. This had happened to such an extent by 1660 that the Earl of Rochester could write that "when he came to Brentford the devill entred into him and never left him till he came into the country again to Adderbury or Woodstock." After the civil wars, when stability had been restored, there was an urge to build and a surge of building. The country house was a status symbol. It gave the family its sense of identity and achievement, Elaborate plasterwork contributed to a house's status, as elaborate icing does to that of a cake.

One can reasonably maintain that the greatest English painters were part of, indeed establishers of, a characteristically English tradition: Hogarth, Gainsborough, Stubbs, Constable (who can be seen as proto-Impressionist), Blake and the Pre-Raphaelites (both ungrudgingly accepted in France now as pioneer Symbolists). The giant exception is Turner, whose demi-god was Claude; though Turner, even more than Constable, has claims to be a proto-Impressionist, the exemplar of a new tradition rather than the continuator of a stale one. It is quite otherwise with the decorative arts. English porcelain is a more or less colourable imitation of the Chinese, Meissen or Sèvres. English silver is deeply infected with Huguenot influence. English glass takes inspiration from Venice. There is a constant infiltration of foreign craftsmen, seeking toleration and/or work.

BEARD'S BOOK GIVES the impression that plaster-work was more commandeered by foreign craftsmen than any other of the applied arts. Italian plasterers probably worked on Wolsey's Hampton Court, and John Evelyn speculated of Henry VIII's Nonsuch Palace that the plaster ornament "must needs have been the work of some celebrated Italian." The *stuccatore* Nicolo Bellin of Modena, who had worked under Primaticcio at Fontainebleau, provided, in Beard's words, "the link whereby the Renaissance style, in all its jumble of French and Italian pattern, transferred to England." The loggia at Horton Court, Gloucestershire, also shows Italian influence. The Thynnes possibly employed an English plasterer, Charles Williams, at Longleat, but he had travelled extensively in Italy and had learned the "mystery of stucco" there. In 1554 or 1555 Bess of Hardwick (then Elizabeth St Loe) asked Sir John Thynne to send "a connyng plaisterer" to work at Chatsworth. Certainly a strong English school of plasterers was developing, and when she later built Hardwick Hall, Derbyshire, she employed some of them—though their work is clearly based on Flemish designs. In the late 17th and early 18th centuries, English plasterers of note included Joseph Kinsman, John Grove, Edward Goudge, who worked on the adaptation of Hampton Court by Wren, and Henry Doogood, the plasterer of Greenwich Palace. But by the early years of the 18th century, the art is again swarming with immigrants, this time Swiss with Italian sounding names, who were indiscriminately referred to as "Italians" by their contemporaries in England. These included Giovanni Bagutti (Castle Howard) Giuseppe Artari (who worked with Bagutti on Moulsham Hall, Essex), Francesco Vassalli (Towneley Hall, Burnley, Aske Hall, Yorkshire and Shugborough, Staffordshire) and the Franchini brothers (Wallington, Northumberland). The Adam brothers used English plasterers, but there was still a strong Italian influence through

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their employing Italian painters such as Cipriani and Zuccarelli, and the designer Michelangelo Pergolesi, who is oddly not mentioned by Beard. (Another astonishing omission, not explained by the parsimony of Phaidon, is of Parham, Sussex, an Elizabethan house of which the fine plaster-work includes a delightful representation of a dodo, not then extinct.)

UNTIL THE 20th century, it might have been claimed that pottery was the most indomitably English of the decorative arts. There was an obvious social reason for this. Unlike silver or glass, most pottery was made by and for a low social class not in touch with the sources of sophisticated foreign influence. But the dominant influence on English pottery in the 20th century has been Bernard Leach; and the dominant influence on Bernard Leach has been Japanese pottery. He studied with the sixth Kenzan in Japan, and is entitled to call himself the seventh Kenzan—the equivalent, in the world of ceramics, of being an English Pope. Tony Birks's *Art of the Modern Potter*[3] and the collection of essays on *Michael Cardew* both show how deep the Japanese influence has gone; but they also show the continued stubborn recrudescence of the English tradition.

There is a distinct hint of the silly-billies in some of Birks's potters, or at any rate his comments on them. Pseuds' Corner yawns to receive them but does not quite gobble them up. There is Anthony Hepburn (b. 1942), Professor of Pottery at Alfred University, New York, who has "a tar-baby relationship" with clay, whatever that may be. "He is not particularly interested in permanence—even in a durable material like clay. Taking off one's shoes and jumping into a bath of clay, leaving prints which can be preserved, but need not be . . . is no doubt a liberating experience." No doubt. Or there is dear old Alan Barrett-Danes (b. 1935): "The positive reaction to Alan Barrett-Danes's work is quite likely to be a recoiling, as one would recoil from finding a grass snake in a green salad. . . . He and his wife create pot-based sculptures on the themes of decay and degeneration . . . organic forms are chosen as obvious symbols of putrefaction." Readers' reactions to these statements may vary from "Why not?" to "Why?" to recoil, as from a rattlesnake in the mustard-and-cress. I've heard of coil pots, but recoil pots are new on me.

Mr Birks's conceits and those of his chosen potters are forgivable in what is otherwise a fresh, adventurous survey of a representative selection of modern workers in clay. In some the

[3] *Art of the Modern Potter*. By TONY BIRKS. Country Life, £5.00.

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Japanese influence is paramount. One would expect it in Bernard Leach's wife Janet, who lived and worked at Hamada's pottery in Mashiko for six months and then went to the potting village of Tamba. But in the work of Hepburn, although he accompanied Leach to Japan and met Hamada, there are strident English echoes, as in the simple cups with exaggerated handles which have a marbled or "variegated" look similar to that of Whieldon wares of the 18th century. Andrew Lord (b. 1950), the youngest potter represented, makes what one assumes are deliberately clodhopping parodies of early English wares of the Whieldon type. The "industrial" strain is also apparent in some of the potter's work. The work of Hans Coper seems to me a development of pure Bauhaus principles—the Industrial Revolution, as it were, extended from mere technique into the art itself. He was born in 1920, the bonny Bauhaus time. The revered (perhaps *too* revered?) Lucie Rie, born in Austria in 1902, combines the industrial-purist and the oriental-purity traditions.

Of Michael Cardew, to whom the last of the books[4] is devoted, Bernard Leach says in an introduction: "He was the first and the best of my pupils." The inevitable Japanese influence is there in Cardew's pots; yet some of them owe far more to primitive English example —tygs, posset-pots and slipware dishes. Wonderfully crafted though all his pots are, they are in the same kind of class as Joan Hassall's wood-engravings or Laurence Whistler's glass-engraving. In other words, they are merely brilliantly derivative—as Hassall is from Bewick and Whistler is from 18th-century engravers. The Birks book shows us, for what they are worth, pots which attempt to express our own time. The pots of Anthony Hepburn, described by Birks, have nothing to do with the china cabinet or the scrubbed pine table on which a Leach or Cardew vase might stand: "At a time when Funk art was burgeoning in America and odd slipcast objects were appearing in British art schools, these ceramics gave a lead. Unlike many of their American counterparts, these pots do not carry a message of horror or despair. A cast telephone set may be surrounded by several receivers for sculptural reasons, not symbolic ones. . . ." The reader of the Birks book must decide for himself which of the pots will really speak for our age, and which are experimental freaks, a ceramic lunatic fringe. As Omar Khayyam says:

And, strange to tell, among the Earthen Lot
Some could articulate, while others not.

[4] *Michael Cardew*. Essays introduced by Bernard Leach. Crafts Advisory Committee, £3, paper £1.75.

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The Future in the Past

From the Greeks to le Corbusier—By STEPHEN GARDINER

A GOOD BOOK ON ARCHITECTURE is difficult to accomplish, quite as difficult as designing a good building. The problems are much the same: research, detail, extensive knowledge, structure and imagination must all be present and absolutely correct. If the book, like the building, falls short of its target, it is exceedingly easy to criticise however hard the author has tried to hit the bull's eye; yet the ease with which so many critics do demolish books (and buildings) serves mainly to suggest how limited is their understanding of the subject that is being scrutinised. Any architectural subject is immense, and immensely complicated, and the strands of influence which eventually determine the nature of a style seem to be so inextricably involved and occur over such vast periods of time that they appear, on occasions, as impossible to comprehend as the idea of eternity. If a style is difficult to get to grips with, how much more complex is a city to understand: strands of influence lead in from all directions, and what we see, except in special cases like Bath or Oxford, is little more, apparently, than a pile of pieces from a jigsaw puzzle. It takes a long time, and considerable experience and patience, to sort the pieces out and place them correctly so that they display a picture that makes sense.

Books help us to sort the pieces out. Great architects—men like Palladio, Wren and le Corbusier—help us too, but then we have to start using our own eyes, and unless we are particularly visual people we have to go back to books again to be shown how to use our eyes—what to look for, how to *see* buildings. Delacroix, for example, wrote in his *Journal* of 1850 that the real meaning of architecture "lies in the absolutely essential harmony between common sense and great inspiration." This observation helps us to understand a genius like Palladio; but it conveys, simultaneously, a picture of human endeavour, and suggests the enormous upsurges of creative energy which can fundamentally alter styles of architecture and the principles by which architectural design is determined; one thinks immediately of the Graeco-Roman age, of the cathedrals of the medieval period, of the Renaissance and the 19th-century discoveries in engineering.

Such happenings may start off a great era of architecture; once the principles of design are established, the style will contract and find a more universal range where these principles can be shown to apply to everyday things. The work of certain innovators can be seen, perhaps, as conclusions of various movements which may have been evolving over centuries—conclusions in so far as they bring the movements together within an architectural order; then the process of scaling down begins. If we regard architecture in this way, and its manifestation in cities, the picture is simplified; replacing the muddle is a strikingly human scene with optimistic and visionary peaks that reveal marvellous views of a life beyond them, but one which can lead on, unfortunately, to disappointments. So far as western architecture is concerned, the highest peak, and the most decisive conclusion, is observed in the Parthenon; the greatest disappointments of all are the wasted opportunities of our own time, in the 20th century.

MEANING IN WESTERN ARCHITECTURE, by Christian Norberg-Schulz,[1] sets the stage. His book begins with the Egyptian influence and then goes on to study the Parthenon. This is right; just as the Etruscans, in the 6th century BC, meticulously copied Greek art in their pottery before going on to find an indigenous style which depicted the gaiety of their life, the Greeks copied Egyptian art, until they too found an indigenous style. What the Greeks did for the Etruscans, the Egyptians did for the Greeks. At the same time, of course, the influences which led up to the final conclusion in the Parthenon range over a very wide area, and a great distance of time. There are sources of influence as far back as the Sumerian civilisation, and in the Mycenean and Minoan cultures when the megaron form was slowly emerging: this form, which appears in Greek houses like Priene, really metamorphosed as the Parthenon. Mr Norberg-Schulz's book then passes on to the Roman era, and then to Gothic. The only trouble with a study of this kind is the distance of time covered—the vast numbers of drawings and photographs leave little room for details; the commentary becomes a bit impersonal.

For detail, however, we can look at other books. William MacDonald's examination of

[1] *Meaning in Western Architecture*. By CHRISTIAN NORBERG-SCHULZ. Studio Vista, £3.75.

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design principles in *The Pantheon*[2] shows how another building form—quite different from the Parthenon's, and circular, not rectangular—again stretches far back into the remote past, and how, too, its influence stretches forward into the future when, 1,300 or so years later, it dominated that most perfect of Palladio's architectural solutions, the Villa Capra. The Pantheon was, as Mr MacDonald explains in his factual, lucid and informal manner, the most memorable building of the Roman era; it fused the early form of the first farmers' huts with the magnificence of the Roman vault. Tradition had met enlightenment—or great inspiration if you like—and in this way tradition was enriched, and was able to progress. Mr MacDonald, in his study of the Pantheon, draws particular attention to the importance of the early hut, pointing out that

> a circular exterior allows the greatest enclosed area a given length of wall can provide. A stake with a line looped around it for the radius is, essentially, all that is needed, and this in comparatively primitive times was often easier to manage than the establishment of right angles properly related.

This practical statement of early building techniques describes the part played by common sense in design. But would Mr MacDonald agree that the builders of these huts—which were, after all, a creation, a shelter freed from the idea of the cave—had taken the essentials from a hole in a rock and had then reproduced them as a man-made structure in space? If this is true—that the shape of the hut is derived from the shape of the cave—we have the kind of combination that Delacroix was talking about: common sense determined a method of setting out the inspiration of genius.

The Pantheon was, of course, a gigantic dramatisation of a naive form, and this dramatisation, which transported the temple to a place among the most sophisticated peaks of architecture, was realised by the astonishing developments in the field of engineering. While Mr MacDonald goes into considerable detail on construction—he is, not unreasonably, fascinated by the Romans' use of concrete poured between the shuttering of brickwork (how much more sensible the Romans were on shuttering than we are, 1,800 years later)—some more information on the mathematics of the structure would have been useful.

HEATHER MARTIENSSEN, however, seems to pick up where MacDonald leaves off with *The Shapes of Structure*.[3] Nobody knows for certain

[2] *The Pantheon*. By WILLIAM L. MACDONALD. Allen Lane, £10.
[3] *The Shapes of Structure*. By HEATHER MARTIENSSEN. Oxford University Press, £3.95.

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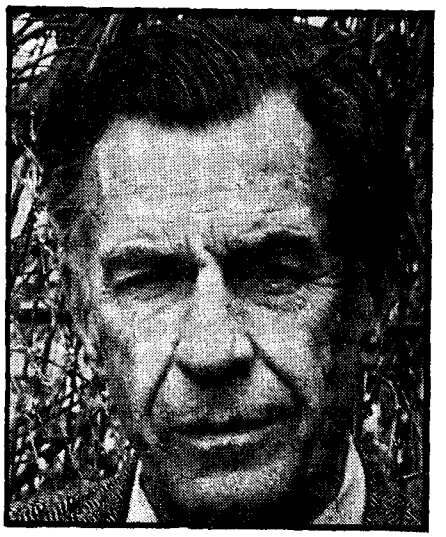
who designed the Pantheon (it could have been Hadrian himself, or his inspiration which put the idea for it into orbit), but this book is more concerned with stressing the art in architecture and the decisive role of the architect in the making of this art. This aspect of building is, again, of immense importance, and unfortunately tragically overlooked today. In big business and bureaucratic circles, much greater stress is laid on what has come to be called the "committee architect"—an eerie and Pinteresque individual whose design decisions are settled by a show of hands round a conference table—with anonymous political considerations to do with things like investment in industrialised systems of building (the rage among local authorities in the 1960s) putting, to use municipal language, an "oar" in when decisions are taken.

Any good building is designed by an architect, and the local bureaucrat and commercial developer needs forever reminding that an architect is a person who can do something which no other person (certainly not a bureaucrat) but an architect can do—design buildings. Our surroundings would be far, far more enjoyable if all those ignorant people who have the power to commission architects would pin those words above their desks. Then, perhaps, the word "environment", only rediscovered when surroundings began to go to pieces with a complete collapse of values a couple of decades or so ago, could be filed away and the Department for it disbanded. The Parthenon was designed by an architect, and so were the Pantheon and the Katsura palace in Kyoto. Heather Martienssen deals at some length with the architect as artist and as engineer, and while one is sure—largely through guesswork—that her heart is in the right place *really*, she fails to describe the place convincingly. For example, her observations about the genius of le Corbusier are seriously weakened by her abrupt and surprising argument that "chairs can never be works of art, because they are always incomplete, standing about waiting for occupants." What about rooms in buildings? Are they not waiting for occupants too? And could she not argue, conversely, that a painting was not art if it hadn't got a wall on which it could be hung?

DEBORAH HOWARD does much better than Heather Martienssen. Instead of straying into a dangerous, trackless jungle inhabited by exotic words like "aesthetic", "beauty", "emotion" and "significant"—nothing wrong with them, of course, in other contexts—Deborah Howard focuses her attention on one man, Jacopo Sansovino. How sensible she is; and

JOHN KENNETH GALBRAITH



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what a marvellous architect he was, yet one, as we know, among countless other such marvellous Italian architects of the 16th century—Palladio, Peruzzi, Sanzio, Scarpagno, Serlio, Leonardo, Michelangelo; no wonder Louis XII and Francis I tried to entice the Italians over the Alps with vast bribes of gold and offers of palaces. Miss Howard's book[4] is set in Venice; so far as Sansovino was concerned, it was in Venice that it was all happening. He took refuge in the city after the Sack of Rome in 1527, never left it, built numerous churches and public buildings, and became an ardent disciple of Palladio. Patrons made no mistake about picking the right architect *then*—they knew there was only one way to make beautiful surroundings that would endure into the far distant and precarious future. Yet although it was little more than a century since Brunelleschi had set the Renaissance rolling with his design for the dome of the cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore, the confidence with which the Venetian architects were building is truly bewildering, for they had totally mastered the scale and order needed for city design.

The genius of these architects—in particular, that of Scarpagnino, Falconetto, Palladio and Sansovino—seems to have lain in their ability to observe the line of continuity which linked them to the past and future. From the beginning, they reduced the grandeur of Roman conceptions to a human scale; thus, and again from the beginning, these conceptions were given a range of a universal kind, or at least one that could be seen to be capable of adaption to universal domestic needs. In this way—and in the Monte di Pietà at Padua by Falconetto, in the extraordinary city terrace of Fabbriche Vecchie di Rialto by Scarpagnino, and in the even more extraordinary Library of St Mark's by Sansovino (modern terminology would call this building a prototype megastructure), not to mention the colonnaded Fabbriche Nuove di Rialto (1550s and clearly influenced by Monte di Pietà) by the same architect—it is possible to perceive a link between 16th-century Italy and what happened afterwards.

In creating an utterly magical architecture, this generation of architects made buildings which not only respected the individual, but which looked up to the community as well. In other words, a man like Sansovino hit on a plain, ordered and simple (very little decoration) pattern for street design which could be regarded—yes, you could say that—as a prototype for the community frame which found its ideal form in the 18th-century town in England 200 years later. It is astonishing to come across such solid links between past and future; it is a good deal due to the excellence of books like Deborah Howard's that one can make such discoveries, and can understand, with any certainty, the significance of particular buildings for the first time: Deborah Howard places a crucial piece of the European jigsaw firmly in position and, as if by magic, a large corner of a world picture is illuminated. For the influence of the Renaissance, as we know well enough, travelled; not merely to France and the Netherlands, but *via* England to Scandinavia, Australasia and America. The Georgian style, that great domestic theme with a universal influence, penetrated more parts of the world than any before it, and seemed to suit the conditions of every country where, like the pioneers it accompanied, it settled.

The Federal architecture on the east coast of America, in Georgetown and Charlottesville, for instance, is as good as anything in Shrewsbury, but whereas in England the Georgian terrace style followed the Palladian mansion (the Villa Capras of William Kent and Colen Campbell), the reverse process took place in America. Wealth was increasing, not declining, over there; the Palladian mansion followed the Federal style. There are some good examples illustrated in Frederick Platt's *America's Gilded Age*[5] although I wish the book started earlier and covered such fantastically beautiful places as Oak Valley, the Wilson and Dexter houses, Arlington in Virginia, Woodlands and Andalusia in Pennsylvania. These were superbly designed buildings and absolute originals—in the way that Inigo Jones's Wilton of two centuries earlier was an original.

THE LAST PIECE of this particular jigsaw connects up all the different periods of architecture, and has as important associations with Roman ambitions as it has with those of le Corbusier: structure—without which no building could be built. *The Book of Bridges*,[6]

[4] *Jacopo Sansovino*. By DEBORAH HOWARD. Yale University Press, $18.50, £10.
[5] *America's Gilded Age*. By FREDERICK PLATT. Thomas Yoseloff, $25.00, Tantivy Press, £10.
[6] *The Book of Bridges*. By MARTIN HAYDEN. Marshall Cavendish Publications, £3.95.

Georges Clemenceau
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although primarily a study of feats of engineering, makes an interesting diagram of structural design in relation to buildings. Here is structure denuded of the coverings of walls, roofs and decoration—post and beam, arches carrying dead loads and live loads, cantilevers, platforms hung from overhead cables, bending-moment force exercises with two-point supports as demonstrated by Benjamin Baker when the Forth bridge was designed. Martin Hayden has made a very good job of this fascinating subject: rather like staircases, bridges are an exciting means of transportation between two positions with views that are, of course, unique to them.

Mr Hayden starts off with neolithic log bridges (a pity he misses those wonderful covered wooden bridges, borrowed from Scandinavia, which one finds in Vermont), and in a very few pages we are back with the remarkable Romans again—the aqueducts at Segovia and at Pont du Gard (the most magnificent of the aqueducts). Once more we are reminded how these extraordinary developments in engineering—the use of concrete, the arch, and the vault—led on to the Pantheon, and, eventually, in the case of the arch and vault, to that other branch of western architecture, the medieval cathedrals which, with the assistance of buttresses, climbed away into the sky. But we find that Roman classical themes also connect up with Palladio, and his bridge design, as adventurous as his buildings, influenced the work of others—at Wilton and Stowe in England—for at least the next 200 years. Yet it is the magnificent work of the 19th century—in the suspension designs by men like Brunel and Telford—that strong links with modern architecture emerge, and with, in particular, the immensely ambitious ideas of le Corbusier. To a far greater extent than any other architect of this century, it was le Corbusier who saw how the principles of bridge construction could be applied to buildings, and who was inspired by the opportunities offered by these principles—see, in particular, the vast suspended structure of his cultural centre for Moscow (the Palace of the Soviets) in the early 1930s.

SIX BOOKS ON WESTERN ARCHITECTURE, and their themes hang together to make a coherent story about building since Ancient Greece. This is not chance: architecture is a story of continuity, of developments, discoveries and connections. The story—this particular one—has a shape which is as satisfying as a circle (the very form which has dominated the proportion and design of the architectures of both West and East). For we started out with Ancient Greece, and in the end le Corbusier leads us back there again; yet, like that age, he also leads into the future.

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Art-Book Notes

MANY VARIETIES OF ART-BOOK are represented in the titles listed below—biographies of two well-known artists, a meditation on art by a leading pundit, an album of photographs related to a particular theme, a collection of critical essays, and a work of popularisation which represents an interesting new art-publishing concept, rather badly executed.

Terry Measham's *The Moderns*[1] belongs to a new series currently being put out by Phaidon, and is evidently part of the change which has come over this once rather staid publisher since it was acquired by a Dutch-based group. Ostensibly a survey of modern painting since 1945, it is in fact very ill-balanced. It's hard to see why a number of the illustrations were included—an insignificant Giacometti drawing, for instance—especially when there are comparatively few of them to cover a broad subject. But at least most of them are big, and quite a lot of them are coloured. In fact, this folio-sized paperback is clearly aimed at the young. First you skim through it, then you tear out the plates you like to stick on the wall and throw the rest away. The pictures which look best are, curiously enough, those which usually come off worst—the big, colourful abstracts. Though the paintings certainly aren't shown life-sized, at least they're shown big enough to give some idea of their scale and impact.

This book apart, the rest of the collection tends to reduce itself to a single word—Picasso. There never was a more striking tribute to the way in which the man dominated his century than the way in which even those volumes which ostensibly have nothing to do with him keep returning to the same topic. Harold Rosenberg's new collection of critical essays, *Art on the Edge*,[2] has no less than thirty-nine separate references to Picasso in the index—far more than to any other person or topic. Picasso isn't the subject of any one single piece—he is simply *there*, pervasive and inescapable. As for the book itself, it remains, like all of Rosenberg's collections, a slightly maddening treat, full of epigrams which mean a little less than perhaps they should ("For Newman, painting was a way of practicing the sublime, not of communicating it."), but also full of the conviction that modern art is worth worrying about, even if you think, as Rosenberg does, that the whole thing is probably coming to an end.

André Malraux, who actually puts Picasso's name in his title,[3] is on the present showing a much less respectable figure intellectually than Rosenberg. The book is actually a segment of autobiography; or, rather, two segments, one centred on Picasso, the other on the paradoxical attempt made by the Fondation Maeght to give concrete reality to Malraux's concept of the *musée imaginaire*. Since I'd been in the process of coming round to Malraux again, after having fallen out of love with him, I was surprised and also disappointed to find how self-serving the book seemed. Malraux's concern is always to put himself on the same footing as Picasso, to suggest that they were equals. His insistence on the point tends to convince one of the contrary, and would do so even if it wasn't for the gossipy nature of the writing itself. The form he uses is that of a conducted tour of Picasso's studio, after the latter's death. Malraux has come to advise Jacqueline, the artist's widow, about giving certain works of art which Picasso had collected (not his own paintings, but things he had either bought or been given) to the Louvre. The spectacle is scarcely edifying. At every step Malraux pauses to give the unfortunate Jacqueline another condescending paragraph or two about the true nature of her husband's genius, and he apparently had no notion of his own sublime insensitivity.

The rooms he describes can be seen in David Douglas Duncan's photographs in *The Silent Studio*.[4] Having made several documentations of this sort while Picasso was alive, Duncan returned to do another after he was dead. The book is based on the naive supposition that the presence of genius must have lingered on amid the material chaos it left behind. But in fact, as one turns the pages, one feels the camera—or, rather, the man who holds the camera—straining for a significance which isn't there. The most memorable images are those which show Jacqueline Picasso herself, drawn and grief-stricken. These, like so many "compassionate" photographs, belong to my mind to the pornography of the emotions.

THERE REMAIN Patrick O'Brian's biography of Picasso[5]—"the first complete life to appear in English"—and David Hockney's autobiography,[6] pieced together from tape-recorded conversations with Nikos Stangos, who has done a brilliant job. It is hard to make up one's mind if Hockney is Picasso's successor, or a sort of anti-Picasso or anti-Christ. From his references to his great predecessor, Hockney himself seems to suffer from much the same difficulty. The

[1] *The Moderns*. By TERRY MEASHAM. Phaidon, £3.95.
[2] *Art on the Edge*. By HAROLD ROSENBERG. Secker & Warburg, £6.00.
[3] *Picasso's Mask*. By ANDRÉ MALRAUX. Macdonald and Jane's, £6.50.
[4] *The Silent Studio*. By DAVID DOUGLAS DUNCAN. Collins, £5.50.
[5] *Pablo Ruiz Picasso*. By PATRICK O'BRIAN. Collins, £6.95.
[6] *David Hockney*. By DAVID HOCKNEY. Edited by NIKOS STANGOS Thames & Hudson, £10.

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two etchings he did in 1973 as tributes to Picasso show a wry acceptance of the situation. In one Hockney himself appears as a student, with a portfolio under his arm, looking respectfully at the great Spaniard, who is presented as a massive bust. Hockney's style of draughtsmanship, as it has developed since he made his series of illustrations to Cavafy in 1966, clearly owes a great deal to the modified and modernised neo-classicism of Picasso's *Vollard Suite*. And there is, in some of his remarks, the implication that he himself is the Picasso of a poor period: one when the artist's opportunities are more limited than they were when Picasso invented Cubism.

In fact, the shared quality which both books tend to bring across is that of utter, unforced, personal originality. Again and again, when Hockney tries to explain why he reacted in a particular way to a given situation—to the reaction of the staff of the Royal College of Art to his work when he was a student, for example—he gives the impression that what he did was merely the simplest and most logical thing to do. Yet these "simple" reactions have always been of a ruthless unexpectedness: the originality of the child who announces that the emperor is wearing no clothes.

There are other shared characteristics too—some of them less admirable. Both artists have shown a certain skill in creating a milieu precisely suited to their own needs, which revolves or revolved around their own personalities. The *bande à Picasso* has its contemporary counterpart in the *bande à Hockney* which was depicted in Jack Hazan's film *A Bigger Splash*. Hockney himself still seems to be reeling from the effects of this, while grudgingly admitting that it does possess certain cinematic virtues. But one wonders if he realises the extent to which it seemed, not to be a film about art, but to be a film about power—the struggle to exercise it, and the struggle to escape from it?

Of course, it is much easier to see such issues (and to raise them) when a man is dead; and Picasso's death is the great advantage Patrick O'Brian's book possesses, when compared to other books on the same subject written when Picasso was still inconveniently alive. As a biography, it's thorough, somewhat partisan (especially where Picasso's women are concerned), and written in a style full of coy circumlocutions. Though not particularly illuminating about Picasso's art, nor even very penetrating about his personality, it supplies the essential groundwork which will enable other studies to be written in due course. As such, with all its defects, it is a book to be grateful for.

Edward Lucie-Smith

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TELEVISION

The Future of Broadcasting

A Memo to Lord Annan—By PETER JAY

MY PURPOSE in this article is to pose the fundamental question what in a free society should in principle determine the kind of broadcast services which are produced, to whom they are distributed, and how they are paid for. (I use the term "broadcast" loosely throughout to refer to anything received on a TV or radio set, irrespective of what method of transmission is used.)

Answers to these questions are attempted. But the aim of the suggested answers is not to be definitive, but rather to illustrate the terms in which these questions need to be approached if any coherent path is to be found through the jungle of special pleading by rival interest groups which occupies so much of contemporary debate about the future of broadcasting.

Must Broadcasting be Controlled by the Few?

INDEED, THESE REMARKS were inspired by the experience of sitting through a typical conference in London about broadcasting attended by eminent executives, producers, trade unionists, and representatives of highly organised viewing minorities, as well as one outstanding telecommunications technologist. Two things emerged:

(1) that technological developments over the next few decades could radically change the physical constraints within which broadcast services are controlled and distributed; and

(2) that the chief preoccupation of those actively and vocally concerned with the future of broadcasting was to arrogate to themselves a tight control over what is broadcast, by whom and to whom—all being by implication unanimous that broadcasting required to be passed through a fine-meshed sieve of the "public interest" and disagreeing only, though ferociously, about who should hold the sieve.

My conference engendered the subversive thought that it was, maybe, neither necessary nor desirable that broadcasting should be controlled by anyone, in the sense of managed by a small group of monopolistic suppliers or censors (whether dominated by commercial executives, "creative" producers, civil servants, critics, prudish or prurient viewers' committees or even respectable laymen recruited from the Treasury's files of the Great and the Good).

A Bias Acknowledged

THE THOUGHT may have been influenced by my bias against paternalism and corporatism, as now practised by Governments of all hues in such matters as the running of the economy, the supervision of insurance, of banking and even of holiday-making; and the general disposition to replace the sovereignty of the consumer in many walks of life by the fatherly dispositions of the benevolent. Frequently, it appears, the legitimate goal of protecting consumers from undue commercial risks becomes perverted (as, for example, when consumer choice is narrowed in the cause of reducing risks rather than enhanced by requiring the fullest possible information about the risks to be displayed to the consumer). Thus are prejudiced both the right of the free citizen as supplier to determine what he wishes to offer and the right of the citizen as consumer to decide what he wishes to receive, and so what in general is produced.

Consumer Protection or Viewer Deprivation

WHATEVER THE PROPER APPLICATION of the doctrine of *caveat emptor* in a free but complex

PETER JAY *is Economics Editor of* "The Times" *(London), and is the Presenter of "Weekend World" on Independent Television. He is the author of "The Budget" and his article is based on the evidence he gave to the Committee on the Future of Broadcasting headed by Lord Annan, whose report is about to be published.*

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society, broadcasting appears to be an area in which the machinery of consumer protection is extremely elaborate, even if its application has in recent years been comparatively liberal and even if the machinery came into existence for reasons quite other than consumer protection. The point is not that the broadcasting authorities do exercise any very restrictive censorship over what is broadcast (though some minorities feel aggrieved about certain specific deprivations), but that they could if they judged the public mood to favour such restrictions. There are no comparably placed authorities monitoring the publication of the printed word, though the biases of proprietary executives and the imperfections of the publishing market doubtless distort the strict matching of writing resources to readers' preferences and means.

I Do We need Broadcasting Authorities?

IT IS OF PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE that, if Lord Annan's Committee are to recommend—explicitly or implicitly—a continued régime of broadcasting authorities (by whomsoever they are dominated and to whomsoever they are accountable), they should be able to give a good and convincing answer to the basic question: "Why does broadcasting (*i.e.* electronic publishing) require a form of central regulation which publishing (of the printed word) does not require?"

Alternatively the Annan Committee could dispute the premise of the question and argue that print publishing does require a statutory British Publishing Corporation and, perhaps, an Independent Publishing Authority. Or, again, it could be argued that there is positive merit in applying opposite principles to complementary activities on the grounds that this reduces the risk of applying the wrong principles across the board. I doubt that many would find such arguments convincing.

There seem to be two origins of the asymmetry between print and electronic publishing:

(1) the physical scarcity of *spectrum*[1] in the early days of broadcasting (and still), which necessitated central licensing as no more than a form of electronic rule-of-the-road, but which thereby created the possibility and then the habit

[1] The term is used throughout to embrace all systems of tele-communication.

"Of those writers who have attempted to distil the last years of the British in India in fictional form, the most ambitious and the most successful is undoubtedly Mr Paul Scott. One cannot read Paul Scott's quartet of novels without being moved; and what is the sense of studying history if it is not to move one and to widen one's moral sensibilities? His achievement is on any count a major one"
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of Parliamentary and so governmental supervision; and

(2) the widespread contemporary belief, especially among politicians that broadcasting—and particularly television—exercises over the public some extraordinary, almost hypnotic, power, which is supposed to be much more sinister and dangerous than anything that the printed word threatens (a belief which was widespread about printing in its early days, albeit at a time when literacy rates were a tiny fraction of what they now are). The first has, of course, often been used as an excuse for the second by people who fear that the latter lacks natural plausibility.

The questions then to be asked by anyone who distrusts any form of statutory monopoly (or duopoly or oligopoly), especially in such sensitive areas as news, opinion, and entertainment, are:

Do the technological-cum-financial facts of life condemn us forever to a centrally imposed rule-of-the-road?

Even if they do, does this alone entail the degree of supervision of broadcasting by public authorities which we now have?

If the answers to either of the first two questions are "*no*", then are there any good non-technological-cum-financial reasons for maintaining this supervision?

II Is an Open Broadcasting Market Possible?

MY UNDERSTANDING is that rather before the end of the century it will be feasible at a very large initial cost to arrange that a nation's viewers can simultaneously watch as many different programmes as the nation's readers can read different books, magazines, newspapers,

"Big is Beautiful":

FOR NEARLY THREE YEARS, *the government Committee on the Future of Broadcasting has been at work under the chairmanship of Lord Annan, and its recommendations will be published shortly. The Committee could, if they so decided, make really radical recommendations. Their predecessors, the Pilkington Committee, had to assume the continuing existence of the BBC but the Annan Committee is under no such limitation. They could, if they judged it in the public interest, recommend the ending of the present broadcasting organisations and the setting-up of different organisations, differently financed and answerable in a different way to society. The periodical review by a group of disinterested and distinguished people is a traditional British procedure—it has taken place at intervals of roughly ten years since 1935—and in my view is much to be preferred to change brought about by Government without preliminary enquiry, as sometimes happens in other parts of the world. We are not necessarily in for change. The Annan Committee could recommend things more or less going on as they are now. We can only wait and see.*

THE CONTINUANCE OF *big broadcasting organisations will be unwelcome to some, particularly those who argue that the BBC, for example, is ill-fitted to serve the needs of the kind of pluralist society which they claim ours is; they argue that substantial sections of the population are excluded from broadcasting or do not have easy access to the microphone and television camera. There are those who want worker participation, or at least greater involvement in editorial decisions. Some argue that regular programming should be provided by political parties or pressure groups, as in Holland where any body of more than 40,000 people initially, and 100,000 after a year on the air, can provide regular programming. It would be rather as though in this country the BBC and IBA ran broadcasting like a great marshalling yard for trains labelled, say, the TUC, the CBI, the Roman Catholic Church, the Consumers' Association, and so on. What is common to these advocates of change in the editorial control of broadcasting is the view that broadcasting is too important to be left to the professionals; the claim made by professionals to be fair and objective is, they claim, suspect.*

I HAVE AN UNFASHIONABLE VIEW *on the way the proper range of programmes can be provided—unfashionable because we live at a time when large organisations are suspect, power is being devolved and small (as the expression goes) is beautiful. My belief is that in broadcasting the opposite is true and that big is beautiful. It is only through size and self-confidence that the broadcasters can be independent and resist pressures in a way necessary to ensure the basic function of providing objective information. Only a large popular organisation can have a relationship with the whole of society and not just parts of it. The knowledge of such a relationship is necessary for the assurance that makes genuine minority broadcasting possible, not as something provided for prestige ("prestige" meant originally "illusion" or "imposture") or because it is prescribed by some external authority, but as something needed and thirsted after if it is not available. There is a very real sense in which philosophers talk on Radio 3 because Morecambe & Wise appear on Radio 2 and on BBC television.*

* P. H. NEWBY, the well-known novelist, is Director of BBC Radio. His remarks were made when he gave the 1977 Haldane Memorial Lecture at Birkbeck College.

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etc.[2] In other words a television set (or radio) will be like a telephone in that the user selects for himself the connection he wants; and it will be quite immaterial what connections other users wish to make for themselves. In contemporary parlance, the number of channels becomes, if not infinite, at least indefinitely large—certainly as large as the number of receivers.

Imagine each set equipped with a telephone dial on which the code number of the desired programme or connection can be dialled. Imagine also the equivalent of a telephone-meter monitoring receptions on each set, linked to the code number of the item received. Imagine, finally, a central "black box" maintained by the Post Office into which an indefinitely large number of programmes can be fed (either by lodging a tape or by direct feed for live transmissions).

[2] This may strictly be an exaggeration, but only in that no one television set can simultaneously display more than one programme; and it may be necessary to watch any given programme at a stated number of minutes past the hour. There will doubtless also continue to be fewer sets than people, though by the year 2000 we may even have the wall-size screen (for multiple simultaneous images) in general use, with the viewer simply choosing which source he wants.

A Broadcast Market

THE REST OF THE CONDITIONS for a free electronic publishing market, with consumer choice and freedom of access, falls quickly into place. No general laws are required other than those which already govern publishing (libel, copyright, obscenity, common law, *etc.*), though there is nothing in the system to prevent Parliament making special laws for electronic publishing (and some special laws may be needed to deal with copyright in a world of satellite transmissions and cassette copying). The only necessary function of the State is to lay a duty on the

P. H. Newby's Views

IF LORD ANNAN RECOMMENDS *the breaking up of the broadcasting organisations and the Government accepts that advice, there will be no one to think of listeners and viewers as a whole and the way they make up a pattern of overlapping minority and majority audiences. It is not just audiences that would be splintered; it is thinking about the broadcasting needs of society as a whole that would be splintered too. After such an act there might well be more broadcasting but its range would be smaller than today and the choices offered to the public fewer.*

MY FRIENDS IN *European broadcasting tend to be a bit sceptical when I tell them I really do not know how my colleagues in the BBC vote. The extent to which the broadcasting organisations in Britain, whether BBC or IBA, are unpoliticised is not well understood on the other side of the Channel. There is even one European country where, turn by turn about, the news is presented from varying political standpoints. Many Europeans are sceptical about the possibility of impartiality. They expect committed broadcasters and might even feel a little cheated if they did not get them.*

Our apolitical professionalism is the product of our national history and the kind of maturity of judgment that dodges the belief that truth is embodied in any one side of an argument. British scepticism about the knowability of anything, the pragmatic tradition—talk of checks and balances in constitutional matters, tolerance in religion—this rather easygoing tradition is brought about by 250 years of expansion and growth. One cannot help wondering whether it can be sustained if the going gets harder, and whether our kind of professional broadcasting would survive in all parts of the United Kingdom if it broke up.

THE QUALITY OF *broadcasting depends on the organisation responsible for it being so large and confident that people working for it can think long-term and in the general interest, as distinct from the immediate ploy for winning audiences or esteem. There are technical and financial reasons for believing that broadcasting in the foreseeable future will be in the hands of large organisations. But what organisations, and what kind of people will work for them? The quality of these people is crucially important. The healthiest future is one in which the best minds in news, current affairs, the arts, the whole communication business, are ready to work for broadcasting in the belief that they can do so with integrity and a commitment to no other motive than "getting it right", telling the truth; and in the belief that art has its imperatives too.*

Having worked for two and a half years, the members of Lord Annan's committee, it is to be hoped, will reflect on the probability (to put it no higher) that we have the best broadcasting in the world, that there must be some reason for this and, as a consequence, will have the strength to resolve on leaving well alone.

The future of broadcasting depends directly on whether the British people continue to believe in the possibility of free minds, whether they believe free minds are necessary for civilisation as we know it and, if so, whether we accept a broadcasting future that no doubt will have its storms and accusations; but, through trial and error in the projection of the arts, through a passion for telling it as it is in news and current affairs, serves our complex and still evolving society well.

P. H. Newby

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Post Office to provide and operate the technology of the system, to accept all programmes which conform to the law, to collect charges from the viewing public and, after deducting its own costs and any other approved taxes or charges, to pass what remains over to the publisher of each item. This indeed is the framework already intended for the *Viewdata* system.

Large and small wholesale publishers will be free to establish themselves. They will arrange and finance the preparation of programmes, set the charges for them, advertise their availability and their code numbers and reward the authors and participants under freely negotiated contracts. Individuals who wish to make their own programmes will be free to do so, though as with books they will either have to find a publisher or bear the costs and risks of publishing themselves.

There is nothing in this system to prevent the State continuing to subsidise any particular categories of electronic publishing which are considered virtuous or in the public interest, even to the extent of ensuring that the equivalent of one or more whole channels of regular transmissions are available to the public without direct charge.

Nor is there anything to prevent any other patron or sponsor from subsidising meritorious, or indeed meritless, productions. The BBC and the independent broadcasting companies would presumably continue as major publishers on the new British scene. But the Independent Broadcasting Authority would disappear; and the BBC would cease to be a broadcasting authority with (self-) regulatory powers and duties, in so far as Broadcasting House can at present be said to exercise over the rest of the BBC analogous supervision to that which the IBA exercises over commercial programme companies. As large independent producers the BBC and the ITV programme companies would doubtless continue to set their own policies and standards; but these need not reflect any general state policy for broadcasting.

The news and party political broadcasts could be catered for either under the general provisions above or by special provision. On the face of it there is no reason why the news should not justify itself commercially; but if it is felt that it needs to be subsidised, this could be done by raising through the Post Office's charging-mechanism a small levy on all other transmissions which are earmarked to finance news services. Party political broadcasts should presumably be financed by the political parties (one would suppose at a loss), though Parliament could require the Post Office to make them available free to the viewer and to collect the cost direct from moneys voted by Parliament.

The treatment of advertising raises no insuperable problem. Either Parliament could disallow advertisement altogether. Or it could require the Post Office to accept programme packages which included advertising material in "natural breaks", in which case the charge to the viewer would be lower—or nil. It would then be up to individual publishers to decide whether or not they wished to include advertising material at intervals during their programmes. The viewers would be free to decide whether they thought this nuisance worth the saving in charges or not.

We Do Not Have to Go On Like This

THIS EXTREMELY COMPRESSED SKETCH of a future market in electronic publishing is designed only to show that there is nothing God-given or immutable about our familiar duopolistic régime, a conclusion which can also be reached from other premises. At present cumbrous giants battle for franchises of the air; and between their occasional encounters are themselves besieged by multiple special interests trying to steer programme time and programme content more to their particular way of thinking. This process in no way guarantees, or even necessarily tends towards, the maximum satisfaction of viewers' preferences. Indeed, that is not even the objective of the present institutions.

The addition of an extra channel, or even two or ten, would not change this essential pattern. Indeed, so long as electronic publishing is confined to a limited number of channels, there is a plausible argument that consumer choice is maximised by giving one authority the duty to provide choice rather than by forcing a small number of rival organisations to vie with each other for a limited mass audience.

III Can We Afford It?

MY ARGUMENT SO FAR has sought to show that, on certain assumptions—which need to be expertly assessed—about the development of telecommunications technology, a radically different organisation of broadcasting—seen as electronic publishing and modelled, partly, on print publishing—would be possible. But technical feasibility does not entail financial feasibility

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(still less desirability), despite the widespread belief to the contrary.

There are, in fact, two distinct *financial* questions about the scheme of electronic publishing sketched here:

> *(1)* Would the huge investment in the necessary telecommunications grid and in the change-over of the nation's receivers to the new system be justified, after allowing for the earnings of the other non-entertainment chargeable services which could be carried on such an electronic network?
>
> *(2)* Would the system of meter-charging for viewing, augmented by specific subsidies on merit and, if allowed, by advertising receipts, generate the revenue necessary to support the required level of broadcasting?

The first question is legitimate and important. The answer to it depends on many variables, whose values are certainly not known to me and some of whose values are probably extremely difficult to assess. Fortunately, the Annan Committee does not have to give a precise answer, since final decisions will not be needed for a decade or so, though some of these decisions are in fact being made outside the purview of the Committee. But it is important to form a view about whether such an investment is likely to be within the realm of the possible or whether it is pure science, or rather financial, fiction, even if the decision itself is not within current terms of reference.

This will partly depend, of course, on the cost of the investment. The Post Office are able to give sketch estimates of this, at least in terms of orders of magnitude. It will also depend on how many other uses there will be, in addition to what we now think of as television services, for the new telecommunications infra-structure. The more there are and the greater the prospective yield from such other uses, the smaller will need to be the specific return from sales of grid capacity to broadcast publishers. Much may also depend on the rate of society's time preference used in discounting the future flow of benefits from the new facility. The arguments will be familiar. It is only suggested here that evidence should be taken from the Post Office—and perhaps the Treasury—in order to establish what is known about the financial feasibility of the original investment.

The second question above is only meaningful if it is supposed that there can be a difference between what the viewing public—together with public and private patrons and sponsors, as well as advertisers if they are allowed—are willing to pay for broadcast material and the right quantity of broadcasting. It is possible to construct senses

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in which there could be such a *conceptual* difference. But it is not a distinction which is normally held to be generally meaningful in the provision of marketable services to the public, except in the areas like National Health or perhaps Housing where some sense and measurements can be attached to the notion of the public's "needs" as distinct from what the public will pay for (though some economists dispute even this).

So, the short answer to the objection that the public would not want to pay for the amount of broadcast material that vested interests or wise men think should be provided is the same as the answer to any other entrepreneur who complains that the market will not bear as much as he would like it to—hard luck!

Spending as Evidence of Demand

INDEED, THE ARGUMENT can be pressed a little further. One of the great merits of the system I have adumbrated here for financing broadcasting, as against finance which depends heavily either on the government's taxing power or on advertising, is that it generates invaluable information about the effective demand for broadcast material and, therefore, about the scale of resources which it is right to invest and to use in supplying that material. Indeed, where this information is not generated, it is common for public authorities either to look abroad to see what proportion of their national incomes other countries spend on comparable facilities, where market choice does operate; or to corral the growth of expenditure into conformity with the average growth rate of the national economy as a whole (*cf.* the present plight of the National Health Services).

Inevitably these proxies for direct evidence of demand lead either to more or to less resources being devoted to the service in question than the public wants. And there is no way of knowing whether it is too much or too little. One may guess, partly from overseas data, that in the areas of national health and broadcasting it is probably less than the public would choose to spend and that in the areas of hard technology, such as futuristic aircraft, it is probably more. It would be better to know than to have to guess. In short, if the public would not buy the planned scale of broadcast material under the arrangements described here, then material ought not to be provided on that scale. This uncertainty is an argument for the method of financing described, not against it.

IV Does Spectrum Scarcity Imply Oligopoly?

IF THE ARGUMENT SO FAR is correct, given for the sake of argument at least the technological premises, then my second question above about the supervision by public authorities does not arise. The technological facts of life do not condemn us to think forever of broadcasting as an oligopolistic activity just because of the scarcity of spectrum.[3]

But even if we were so condemned to a small number of channels, it would not necessarily follow that the present degree of central editorial control was necessary. Of course, there would have to be some basic rationing of air time by someone—and that would rule out anything like the devolution of control to consumers and the dissemination of access to any producer which the full electronic publishing market would make possible. But the rationing authority does not have to allocate access to programme-makers in units of a channel at a time (as the sharing by *Thames* and *London Weekend* of the ITV channel in London shows).

Moreover, the financing system suggested here for a fully developed electronic publishing market could probably be used even in continued conditions of oligopoly, with or without continued advertising and direct levy revenue. Indeed, much simpler meters would be needed, recording only which channel was selected at what time and date. This in itself would enhance the influence of viewer preference, by measuring the intensity as well as the volume of the public's taste for different programmes. Some independent publishers could get a foot in the door, if programmes were thus directly sold to the public, if there were rather more channels than at present and if some part of each channel were earmarked for independent publishers.

The danger is that this would degenerate into imitative competition for mass audiences, though differential pricing of programmes would mitigate this to some extent. This is why it is still probably best for the bulk of the output in conditions of "scarce spectrum" to be planned by a single authority with a duty to provide

[3] This, admittedly, also assumes that the original investment in the telecommunications grid is not judged to be prohibitively expensive well into the next century.

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diversity. Clearly, so long as channels are scarce, the possibilities are severely limited. It is very much a third-best world, just as the print publishing world would be if only a hundred books could be published each month, only five hundred magazines a month and only two national newspapers a day—and some statutory body had to allocate these opportunities between publishers. Even so, something rather less monolithic (or duolithic) and rather more sensitive to consumer preference might be achieved.

V *Do We Want an Open Broadcasting Market?*

THIS, THEN, LEAVES MY THIRD QUESTION —namely, are there any good non-technological-*cum*-financial reasons for going on as at present *i.e.* in the sense of keeping electronic publishing under the degree of statutory supervision which the BBC charter and the Independent Television Act have laid down even after historical rule-of-the-road reasons for this involvement of the State have become technically obsolete? Readers will answer this question according to their different political and social philosophies.

In the circumstances I have envisaged here for the end of the century there need be literally no limit to what can be published electronically, other than the general law and what the public (and others) will pay for. In those circumstances the only role of supervision is to prevent the publication of lawful material which the public would choose and pay for. Otherwise, supervision is wholly passive and merely reproduces what would happen under open publishing. To believe that such prevention of publication would be desirable it would appear to be necessary to believe one or more of the following propositions.

(1) That a man or woman does not always know what is best for him or her to receive; that someone else does know best (or at least knows better); that Parliament can embody that somebody else's knowledge in some general law or, more likely, appoint him and his like to control what is available to the public; that Parliament will in fact normally appoint the right people; and that the fact that Parliament thinks this someone else knows best gives Parliament and the someone else the right to deny the public access to the forbidden material.

(2) That free electronic publishing would in practice lead to a narrowing of choice, even in

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the new conditions described, as compared with what would happen under a benevolent supervision; that the supervision would in practice tend to be benevolent and that by preventing the publication of too many similar programmes of little "worth" resources can be kept free (or, rather, not too expensive) for more worthwhile or varied productions.

(3) That economic activities, of which broadcasting is certainly one in the sense that it uses scarce resources including labour to purvey goods or services to the public, exist primarily or exclusively for the benefit of those who work in them rather than for those who use their output; and that workers are likely to have a better time of things working for a benevolent (perhaps malleable) supervisory authority, backed by the State and its taxing power, than they would have supplying a competitive market in which the consumer was sovereign and some big publishers, whether public or private, came to play a large part.

It will be evident to readers that none of these propositions makes much appeal to me. Few in fact would be found today to defend the first proposition as it stands. But there are many who, without perhaps admitting it even to themselves, adopt positions which entail this proposition; and it is better to see it nakedly for what it is: namely, a complete rejection of the philosophy of the primacy of the individual and of his liberty on which most people would claim that our society is and ought to be founded.

The second proposition is rather more plausible at first sight. But this is only because the alternative system of electronic publishing suggested here is being construed as though it were still oligopolistic publishing, but writ a little larger. It will be asked how in practice can an indefinitely large number of electronic publishers, to say nothing of countless go-it-alone authors, afford the hugely expensive overheads (such as cameras, studios, editing facilities, *etc.*) which television production requires. Only the few could do it. And competition among the few leads to homogenised products and negligible choice; or it leads to domination by big corporations.

THIS IS MISTAKEN. It will not be necessary for any but the biggest publishers to have their own studios, *etc.*, any more than every print publisher and author has to own his own press. It will pay entrepreneurs (as indeed it already does) to provide studio facilities and to hire them out to all comers. Small publishers and go-it-alone authors will rent what they need when they need it. Even that may be more expensive than printing and publishing a limited edition of one's own book. But then no one has a God-given right to use whatever resources they want to indulge personal fantasies. Either one pays for these resources oneself, or one persuades a patron to do so, or one persuades a financier to do so in the expectation of a return.

THE ARGUMENT FOR "workers' sovereignty" lacks any intelligible philosophical basis for its major premise—outside of certain religious orders which genuinely exist for the sake exclusively of fulfilment in work (*i.e.* prayer, contemplation, and so forth) and which literally produce nothing beyond their own meals, clothes, and shelter that can be of material benefit to anyone (except maybe to God). For the rest the notion seems to be a confusion. The exercise of "worker power" may well be in the selfish interest of individual groups considering themselves as workers in a world in which anonymous millions supply the things they themselves wish to consume; but it degenerates into nonsense if generalised into an economic basis of society.

In practice in the broadcasting industry the argument, whether deployed by executives, "creative" staff or manual workers, is no different from the special pleading of all manner of groups—from farmers to furnacemen, and from opera singers to obsolete printers—to be preserved at the expense of the rest of society in their customary way of life irrespective of whether it any longer serves a useful purpose. Society may judge in some cases that it wishes to make such provision either out of compassion or for other reasons.

But unless such arrangements are by nature exceptions to some more utilitarian general rule, the logical conclusion is the Monastic-Life-for-all. My third proposition thus depends either on making a general rule of "workers' sovereignty" or in a special case for adding broadcasting to the list of exceptions to the rule of Consumer Sovereignty. The general rule leads quickly to absurdity; and it seems hard to think of a less appropriate or deserving exception to the more practical rule of Consumer Sovereignty in economic affairs.

An End of Log-Rolling

IT FOLLOWS, THEN, THAT IN A WORLD in which central supervision is not an inevitable by-product of some broadcasting rule-of-the-road, there is no compelling need for continued monolithic (or indeed duo-, or oligo-lithic) broadcasting franchises.

Once this is accepted, it can be seen that most

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of the problems which preoccupy public debate about the future of broadcasting disappear, at least if the time-scale is extended far enough into the future to comprehend the kind of developments envisaged here. For most of those problems are problems about allocating scarce publishing opportunities between competing interest groups (whether established institutions; financial vested interests; worker vested interests; evangelical producers; Scotsmen; Welshmen; Irishmen; divines; educationalists; ethnic minorities; or any other form of man-in-his-organisations as against man-in-his-home-wanting-to-sit-in-his-armchair-and-watch-the-telly.

Once there is no allocation to be made, there will be no lobbies and so no headaches to be suffered in arbitrating between them. Only consider what the problems would be if government had to renew, or not renew, *The Times*' charter or to allocate the tabloid franchise between the *Daily Mirror*'s International Publishing Corporation and Mr Rupert Murdoch; or if areas of the country had to be exclusively shared out to Macmillan, Cape, and Penguin. It is only by looking at it in this way that the liberating effects of escaping altogether from the need to allocate scarce electronic publishing opportunities can be fully appreciated.

At the same time, of course, the power in the hands of the great allocator is liquidated; and government, as well as the vested interests and busybodies who believe they can manipulate government, will resist this. But this is scarcely an argument why Noël Annan's Committee of inquiry should bless such an unnecessary exercise of power with spurious respectability.

VI In The World of Spectrum Scarcity

WHAT RELEVANCE DO SUCH SPECULATIONS have to the more immediate decision that must be made about the governance of broadcasting in the remaining decade or two during which the technological facts of life will continue to make oligopoly inevitable?

It helps one to travel intelligently, if one knows where one is going. If the ultimate purpose is to diversify access, to destroy control and to devolve choice, then it will be sensible to limit the power and size of central institutions to what is strictly necessary during the transitional decade or two before a fully open market in electronic publishing can be declared.

What precisely, then, are the necessary functions in an era of limited television channels? There has to be a rule-of-the-road to prevent multiple transmissions on the same wavelength. This is the historic function of government; and it has become the pretext for the much more general involvement of public authorities in broadcasting.

As I have argued above, the best compromise in a third best world of continued spectrum scarcity does not necessarily lie half-way between the present system and a full open market in broadcasting—not, at least, in the sense of just having ten or twenty, instead of two or three, competing channels. That probably is the worst of all possible arrangements. American experience seems to confirm this, whether consumer satisfaction, quality, or diversity of choice are taken as the criteria for judging a system.

If, then, the ultimate object is seen to be a full open market in broadcasting by the end of the century, but with continued spectrum scarcity and, therefore, with limited numbers of centrally allocated channels being unavoidable for the next twenty years, what are the right principles to govern this important interim? The purpose should be to apply as nearly as is feasible the principles of the ultimate goal rather than to ape its superficial characteristics in circumstances

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which may produce quite different results. Those principles are essentially "Power to the Individual Viewer" (emphatically not to Viewers' Committees and similar collective proxies for consumer opinion) and "Opportunity to the Producer."

"POWER TO THE VIEWER" is the more easily approached under conditions of spectrum scarcity. The key to it, as in any system of individual consumer sovereignty, is the price mechanism. If the individual consumer pays, then his preference cannot but dominate the decisions of producers in conditions of competition.

It may be said that the present system of financing broadcasting (by advertising revenue and government levy) forces the broadcasting companies to pay just as much attention to consumer preference as direct payment would. But this is manifestly not so. Advertisers and BBC executives are concerned with the numbers receiving a programme, not with the degree of each individual viewer's appreciation of the programme (despite "reaction indices" and other such approximations to a measurement of the intensity, as distinct from the extent, of consumer response).

It is precisely this emphasis on *numbers*, in which every viewer counts for one and none counts for more than one, which creates a bias against the satisfaction of minority tastes. To appreciate the point one only needs to imagine what would happen to book publishing if revenue depended wholly on the numbers reading each book and not at all on the value placed by readers on the book, as reflected in their willingness to pay more for some books than for others (a phenomenon which has indeed already contributed much to the difficulties of national newspapers and magazines).

Therefore, the highest priority should be given to introducing a system of direct payment for broadcast services approximating as closely as possible to the metering and quarterly billing system used for telephones. The benefits are so enormous that a very substantial capital cost (even before the rest of the infra-structure of an open market in electronic publishing was technically feasible) would be justified. If it is said, as in so many contexts, that the poor would lose, the answer must be that redistribution should be achieved through the tax and social security systems, duly enhanced, and not used as an excuse for market suppression.

It is interesting to note that, even if direct payment in fact led to exactly the same programmes being demanded and received by exactly the same people as at present and to no new productions—improbable as that may be—being wanted, it will still be a justified change. Here are five reasons:

(1) Scale and type of service would then be known to be the right scale and type of service, for which there is and can be no evidence under present financing arrangements.

(2) The demand revealed would then provide the indispensable evidence on which future investment decisions should be made.

(3) The opportunities for political interference, favouritism, corruption and metropolitan bias which the present system affords would disappear.

(4) The resources used in the making and transmission of advertising material could be saved, if Parliament decided not to allow commercials under the new system.

(5) The expenses of licence collection and the problems of licence evasion would disappear.

It would, of course, be essential that the charging system allowed different charges to be made for different programmes, not merely according to their duration. This change, rather than any further institutionalisation of the supposedly archetypal viewer in advisory committees, is the only proper way to devolve power to the individual viewer. Only then, for example, can the man (or woman) who would like to spend the equivalent of his annual licence fee on one programme a month dealing with his special interest and who does not wish to receive any other programmes express his effective demand for that service.

Opportunity to the Producer

"OPPORTUNITY TO THE PRODUCER" is clearly much more difficult to guarantee so long as the technical facts of life require that someone shall allocate access to scarce spectrum.

As I have already suggested, the allocation of each one of, say, six or ten channels to competing enterprises is *not* the answer, though under conditions of direct payment and differential prices it would not produce the same bias towards homogenised programmes which the worst of the American system now does. Indeed, if channel franchises were auctioned (offering contracts which would safeguard all the proper matters of public interest) in conjunction with direct payment for programmes, the system of competing channels would work much better, in terms of choice and quality, than it presently does or can.

Nonetheless, with only five or even ten competing suppliers, there would still be bound to be a high degree of direct duplication and, therefore, under conditions of absolute scarcity of spectrum, limitations of choice which are not necessary. Moreover, the existence of five or ten channel moguls instead of two or three would make

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only a marginal contribution to extending producer opportunity. The big corporations and the "big boys" would still tend to dominate the interpretation of what, if any, new and experimental material should be offered to the consumer.

IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES my preference in this third best world would be for the following:
(1) A single broadcasting "authority" charged with integrated scheduling of all available channels with a view to ensuring diversity of consumer choice and maximising consumer satisfaction as reflected in consumer preferences under a direct payment system.
(2) Multiple "big" publishers (or programme companies) supplying the staple material for integrated scheduling by the broadcast authority.
(3) Access to the schedules for an indefinite number of "small" publishers—or indeed individual productions—under a general rule of thumb that a minimum of, say, 20% of all general transmissions (weighted according to average audiences at specific times of day) must be drawn from such "small" publishers.
(4) Such special provision for news, political access, religion, and education as Parliament judges necessary and as government is prepared to support by specific subsidy.

THIS FORMULA preserves the best guarantees of diversity in a world of spectrum scarcity while paving the way for the transition to a fully open broadcast market by:—(*a*) isolating the functions of broadcasting "authority" and central scheduling in an institution which can simply be abolished outright when the open market is inaugurated; (*b*) fostering the specific development of the necessary large publishers (and by implication helping the production departments of the BBC to develop into such an institution); (*c*) fostering the development of small publishers and individual freelance producers (and so of the rentable facilities which they will need); (*d*) establishing the financing basis of an open market and accustoming the public to the imperatives of a world in which the individual consumer rather than the organised lobby is sovereign; and (*e*) generating information about the public's effective demand for broadcast services, which will be invaluable when it comes to assessing the likely return on the investment required to establish the telecommunication infra-structure of a fully open market in broadcasting.

VII Some Conclusions

I HAVE BEEN TRYING TO define a concept of the Open Market in electronic publishing as the desirable goal towards which the development of broadcasting should be steered by the end of the century. I have further offered a framework description of the interim arrangements between now and the end of the century which would best reconcile the need to prepare for the fully open market and, meanwhile, to ensure consumer choice and sovereignty combined with producer opportunity.

As stated at the beginning my main purpose is not to insist upon these particular conceptions, but rather to suggest a breadth of approach which seems essential if any coherent criteria are to be developed for judging the more specific and short-term proposals of rival interest groups. Nonetheless, the particular conceptions are seriously offered as being the right ones and as deserving some attention even though the Annan Committee's main focus is on the near term.

Inevitably, the facilities available to the private essayist, who must also earn his living, are severely circumscribed. And therefore many answers to technical and financial questions raised by this presentation cannot be answered by me. My purpose is rather to show why the answers should be sought from competent authorities and to show the context in which such answers are important for the ultimate future of broadcasting.

Accordingly, I favour the earliest possible introduction of a system of broadcast financing based primarily on metered viewing and quarterly billing; and the establishment of a single broadcast authority and multiple large and small publishers with guaranteed access.

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Laurence Lerner

A Sestina

There was a time (if we believe the poets)
When Midas touched the grass, and it was money,
When London's streets were gold, and gold her pavements,
When handsome youngsters fell in love with water,
When how to catch a nymph was common knowledge,
When verse was used in monographs by scientists.

There was a time (if we believe the scientists)
When priests and shamans were the only poets,
When myth and legend were the only knowledge,
When iron could not be got for love or money,
When life began in mud beneath the water,
And peaks began their slow decay to pavements.

Who has not wondered, tramping lonely pavements,
If we are better off for all these scientists,
Big bangs big bombs light waves and heavy water,
Their boundless finite universe. Could poets
Give birth to wilder parodies of knowledge?
Why should they squander all our hard-earned money?

Some think that virtue can be bought for money.
Some think true genius has to sleep on pavements.
Some think philosophy is bogus knowledge,
That politics is better left to scientists,
The party line should be imposed on poets,
And pacifists be put on bread and water.

What kind of thirst is quenched on holy water?
Surely not that for power or fame or money.
The gospel makers were not idle poets.
When people kneel down suddenly on pavements
Believe in miracles in spite of scientists,
We shall no longer know what's faith, what knowledge.

What former ages left to us as knowledge,
Casting their books like bread upon the water,
Will soon be rendered obsolete by scientists.
And yet we build museums, pay all that money
For broken fragments of mosaic pavements
Or scribblings on torn paper by dead poets.

One day gay scientists on all our pavements
Will stand dispensing knowledge. One day poets
Laughing will throw their money on the water.

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PRESS

Letter from Rome

Put the Mafia on Page One!

By Luigi Barzini

THE EDITOR of the big popular evening paper shouted angrily at the sub-editor who had asked him for instructions. "What the hell are you talking about?" he cried. "Do what we've always done. You know which side we're fighting on, don't you?"

"Well", the sub answered soothingly, twirling the typewritten sheet round and round, "that's just it. What side *are* we fighting on?"

To be honest, the Editor hadn't been fighting on that particular side for very long. Quite recently he had been seduced by praise of his moral integrity and by a long-term contract (which was as generous as those usually given to the heads of highly unprofitable state-run industries, fixed up by the minister involved). This was why he was always slightly nervous when suddenly asked for a decision. To be on the safe side he chose the solution most contrary to his natural bent—that is, the most extremist, irrational and demagogic. Anything to avoid seeming *tepido*. He was no fool.

"Do what we've always done", he went on in an authoritative tone. "If these prison convicts have rioted, beaten up the screws, burnt their mattresses and barricaded themselves on the roof, if they're demanding a personal apology on TV from the Minister, and freedom (plus a new suit each, a passport, and a handout in dollars), which side are we on?"

"I don't know", said the sub, who had been on the paper and in that particular political climate for a very long time, and so had seen just about everything. "You tell me."

The Editor gazed at him, patiently and indulgently. "Well, on the prisoners' side, of course", he said. "Prisoners, like industrial workers, are always right. The headline, as well as the story, must put it quite clearly—that they're innocent victims of the System, of an evil pitiless society that's exploited them. . . ."

The sub coughed mildly, to express a little doubt. But the Editor took no notice. ". . . victims of a system imposed, in the last analysis, by the tanks of American *imperialismo* . . . even if they're metaphorical tanks, of course, for the time being. . . ."

"BUT YOU'VE FORGOTTEN that we haven't been quite so rude about the Americans lately", said the sub. "And remember that some of the prisoners on the roof are *fascisti*. Some are agitators financed by Chile's Pinochet and by South Africa's Boss—or so we said. Some of them are inside for currency fiddles, and some are doctors who insisted on treating sick patients during a strike and were given sentences by magistrates who were on our side. . . ."

The Editor looked thoughtful. "Try and distinguish between bloodthirsty thugs in the pay of some foreign power, fighting to destroy our state which was born out of the *Resistenza*—and the victims of Capitalism, of the law of the *padroni*."

The sub shook his head. How on earth could you make distinctions like that in the few punchy words of a headline? In the photograph that was to illustrate the piece the rioters all looked much the same, with long hair and beards, and wrapped in rough blankets. . . .

The Editor looked at the photo and scratched his head. "You're right", he said. "There's no Left or Right on the roof, as there is in Parliament. What do you suggest?"

"And what's more", the sub went on, "it seems the riot leader is a queer who's inside for selling heroin to school-kids. . . ."

"A queer?" said the Editor, perplexed. "Heroin? Now that's embarrassing. Well, we can do what we generally do in cases like that—in our summing up, at least, we can make it look as if the man was a wretched victim of a frame-up by the police. How about that?"

"He wasn't framed", the sub said, quite unruffled. "He's a very well-known *invertito* who was caught in the act and admitted everything. Remember, our readers are a rather ignorant lot and still feel horrified at the thought of queers selling heroin to school-kids."

At this point the Editor stared, glassy-eyed, at a squiggle on the wallpaper for several moments. Then he asked humbly, "What do you suggest?"

"We could have a soothing sort of headline",

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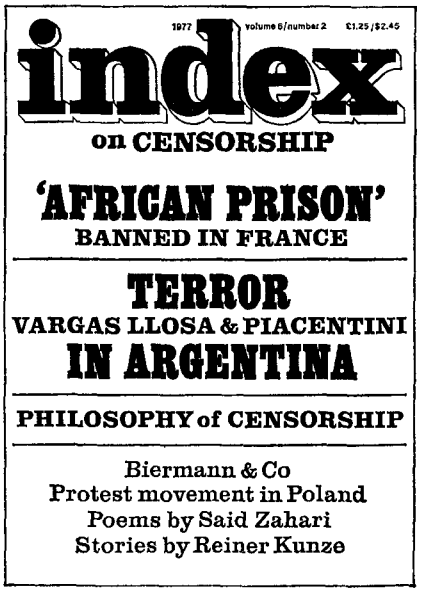

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said the sub. "The sort that mentions only the facts. . . ."

"Never!" shouted the Editor. "Never. That's a bourgeois solution, inspired by what's known as 'objective truth' and all that. Never."

THE EDITOR THOUGHT for a few moments; then his face lit up. "*Ecco*, I've got it", he cried. "How about this for a brilliant solution? It's been tried out for decades—what am I saying?—it's been tried out for centuries, it's always the same, yet it's still as good as ever. It's all the fault of the Government. It's a fake riot organised by the Minister of Justice. Obviously the Prime Minister wants to spread panic among solid citizens and distract public attention from the Lockheed scandals. . . ."

The sub sighed. "Not bad at all. But we've absolutely nothing, however much we refurbish the facts, that can possibly support that notion, even feebly. Why on earth should the Prime Minister want to distract attention from the scandals? They're old hat. No one gives a damn about them now, they all took place in earlier governments which are pretty well forgotten. People have plenty of other things to worry about today. Besides, you've overlooked that we decided to support the present government (though without allowing it to solve any of its insoluble problems). The way you might prop-up-a-drunk-while-pouring-booze-down-his-throat—your very own words, remember."

The Editor gave a bitter, barking laugh. "Don't tell me we've got to the stage of having to stick up for this phoney legitimate government, for law-and-order and the fuzz and the hanging judges. At this rate, I'll have to cheer when progressive idiots fail their exams and hard-working students pass them. . . . What in the world are we coming to?"

"I've got an idea", said the sub. "We can't say it's the fault of the System, or the USA, or the Government—for reasons you know very well. Whose fault is it, then? I'll say it's the fault of the Mafia. That's a nice short word, only five letters. No hassle. Looks good in a headline. No one likes the Mafia. And they won't put out any official denials. What do you think? . . ."

With tears in his eyes the Editor hugged the sub, and asked him to have an *espresso*.

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DISCUSSION

The Political Jesus?

Thesis or Truth

By Samuel Sandmel

MY FIRST REACTION to Hyam Maccoby's "Is the Political Jesus Dead?", is: what is this article doing in ENCOUNTER [February 1976], to which I subscribe? In my view the arena in which to do combat on varying interpretations of the Jesus of history is that of Gospel scholarship, namely, professional journals and professional books. About two years ago I wrote about Maccoby's book *Revolution in Judaea: Jesus and the Jewish Resistance* (1973) in commenting on a number of New Testament studies. I praised it for its clarity in setting forth a well-worn theme, I said wistfully that all too often scholarly interpretations rest on sources that are deemed to have perished but have survived, altered, within other literature (Maccoby supposed that Mark was rewritten from an earlier "Nazarene Gospel" which portrayed Jesus as a rebel against Rome). I think it is not unfair to suggest that the present article tries to buttress Maccoby's book.

The present article has some infelicities,[1] errors of commission respecting facts, and, more significantly, those of omission; but these matters can be omitted here since I am limited in space. I personally subscribe to the hypothesis that Jesus historically was a political rebel as does Maccoby. I believe, though, that the case for this view rests on reason and logic and not on any abundance of direct and persuasive evidence. The review which I wrote several years ago of S. G. F. Brandon (*Jesus and the Zealots* and *The Trial of Jesus*) praised Brandon's honesty and erudition unreservedly. I expressed anxiety, though, about Brandon's methodology, and about his tendency, as I see things, towards a lack of restraint in trying to peer behind the Gospels.

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I only wish that Maccoby had cited the long and erudite assault by Martin Hengel on the Brandon thesis; I wish, too, that Maccoby had been a little less impulsive in citing Rudolf Bultmann in support of the "Jewish" approval; and I was a bit startled at his rather reckless manner of dealing with Geza Vermes.

But what has distressed me more than any single item in the article is what seems to me to be a tone of belligerence towards Christian scholars. This is as lamentable as are the recurrent slurs on Jews and Judaism that disfigure so much of European Gospel scholarship (the British to some extent, and the German even more). What Maccoby does not present at all adequately, so it seems to me, is that set of problems which confront decent Christian New Testament scholars in their continued "quest" for the "Jesus of history." He touches on these, but abstains from probing them. Briefly, the utilisation of Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha and Rabbinic Literature greatly reduced claims for the originality of the teachings of a purely human Jesus which previous generations had set forth. The relative proximity of the teachings of Jesus to those of the Pharisees is today uncontested (but see below). Was Jesus a rabbi (the *title* appears to be later than his age)? Is it praise to call Jesus a rabbi, or is it denigration? Perhaps a more agreeable and more gratifying term, repeatedly affirmed in Christian scholarship, is "prophet."

Scholars have clearly demonstrated a congruency between Jesus and his Jewish environment; the need has become urgent for many Christians to find a basis on which to find some uniqueness in a purely human Jesus. I suppose that the three main factors that impede Christian scholars from acquiescing in the view that Jesus was a political figure are: the relative paucity of direct evidence; a distaste for the view; and the assertion in *John* 18.36, "My kingdom is not of this world."

However, the accrued abundance of materials, such as the Dead Sea Scrolls, have made prominent the case for the "Jewishness of Jesus." Then in what way did Jesus differ from his fellow Jews so as to have sparked a new movement? If one suggests that Jesus himself sparked nothing—but that later figures (particularly Paul) did this—then the ordinary Christian scholar seems to feel intuitively that he is either losing, or has lost, his unique Jesus; and hence he resists this sort of approach. Accordingly, despite the common, indeed fairly universal, conclusion among

[1] For example, the impression given that the denial of a Q is "recent"; that the *pioneers* of Christian awareness of the anti-Semitism of the Gospels awaited 1964 and 1974; that the well-known Pharisee principle on the Sabbath "appears in the same words in the Talmud."

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Christian scholars that the "Jesus of history" cannot be recovered, they seem constrained to end up with some historical view of him, since "historical agnosticism" is uncongenial. In earlier days, Christian scholars set forth a praiseworthy Jesus as over and against both unworthy Jews and unworthy Judaism. Scholarship has largely dissolved this "unworthy Judaism." The supposition of "unworthy Jews" can smack of anti-Semitism; and from this taint American Christian scholars certainly wish to be free, and so do some (but not all) British scholars. How, then, can one find a satisfactory "Jesus of history", a Jew in a Jewish setting, whose distinctiveness from other Jews must not be couched in anti-Semitic terms?

That seems to me the essential problem for them.[2] In this context, I do not think that Maccoby is fair to David Catchpole (he could have been more effective with Catchpole had he addressed himself to what in my mind is the extravagant reliability that Catchpole ascribes to the Passion narrative in *Luke*). That is to say, Maccoby seems to me to exhibit inadequate understanding of the genuine predicament of honourable, decent Christian scholars.

Maccoby makes no mention of Norman Perrin (of the University of Chicago) who has worked in so-called form criticism and redaction criticism, and who has set forth the "principle of dissimilarity." By this he means that the teachings which (according to Perrin) authentically go back to Jesus are those that are unlike the Jewish doctrines known from the other sources. To my mind the criticism of this view (as by Helmut Koester) does not go far enough. But let us ask a question not yet asked, so far as I know: Is "the principle of dissimilarity" in its essence anti-Jewish? If it is, is it so deliberately, or only unconsciously? Or what is it that has precipitated a movement from the recurring question—In what way was Jesus different?—to the assertion of this startling (and untenable) principle?

Maccoby's transition seems to me very abrupt when he suddenly turns from the "political Jesus" to the "Jewish Jesus," and to conclude that the "Jewish Jesus" is still very much alive. Of course it is. It has been the specification of *what kind of Jew the Jewish Jesus was* that has been elusive. Even the "political Jesus" has never died. It has been alive, but is not very lively; an occasional Eisler, or Carmichael, or Brandon raises it to centrality, and then it recedes. It has never expired; it simply has never truly caught on.

The total effect of his essay is to leave one to wonder if Maccoby has as yet adequately confronted the Gospel scholarship.

[2] New Testament scholars who are partially or noticeably anti-Semitic have no such problems.

The Historical Jesus is "Dead"

By Trude Weiss-Rosmarin

HYAM MACCOBY concludes his essay, "Is the Political Jesus Dead?" with the affirmation that "The Jewish Jesus is still very much alive." Mr Maccoby's "defence" of the Historical Jesus, whom he conceives as "the Jewish Jesus", typifies the attitude of Jewish scholars of the New Testament who tend to accept the Gospel data on Jesus as basically factual, although coloured by the partisan rivalry and enmity of the early Church.

Jewish scholars know, of course, that the Gospels are *not* history as historians understand and define it. Nevertheless—and this is inconsistent—they delineate Jesus's Jewish identity and his identification with the Jewish people and its faith and hopes in consonance with the Gospel reports. They also take issue with the Gospel accounts of his trial and death as if they were history.

In this respect Jewish students of nascent and early Christianity tend to be more "Gospel true" than modern and contemporary Christian New Testament scholars who are in agreement that the "Historical Jesus" is beyond recovery, and that this need not be deplored because "the Gospels are not historical records but documents of faith." Hans Gonzelmann expresses the virtual consensus of contemporary New Testament scholars that

> "for a great portion of the tradition there is no possibility of establishing the exact place in the life of Jesus. We no longer know the sequence of events, and, above all, we cannot reconstruct an outer and inner development. . . . The Gospels in their entirety are witnesses of faith. . . . For that reason they have no interest in the 'portrait' of Jesus."[1]

[1] Hans Gonzelmann, *Jesus* (Philadelphia 1973), pp. 7, 15.

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As a consequence of the emphasis on the "Jesus of Faith" and the relegation of the "Historical Jesus" to relative unimportance, Jesus's "Jewishness" and his trial and crucifixion are of no interest to most contemporary New Testament scholars. This does not imply, however, their denial that Jesus *lived,* that he taught and suffered the *kerygmatic* death on the cross. Jesus's life as *kerygma* is taken for granted. It is axiomatic truth, although the facts of his life are not verifiable by the methods of historical research. Far from being a source of frustration this inaccessibility is considered an advantage by many New Testament scholars. As they see it, it liberates the Jesus of the *kerygma* from the limitations of time and place.

"We need no longer consider it disastrous," asserts James M. Robinson, "that the chronology and causality of the public ministry [of Jesus] are gone." But if this is the case, what is the purpose of "a new quest of the historical Jesus" which Robinson attempts? It aims at "an existential encounter with a historical person, Jesus, who can also be encountered through the mediation of modern historiography." For Robinson, this "modern historiography" is existential historiography—an historiography not concerned with dates and facts. Therefore it "cannot verify the truth of the *kerygma,* that this person actually lived. . . . But it can test whether this *kerygmatic* understanding of Jesus's existence corresponds to the understanding of existence implicit in Jesus's history, as encountered through modern historiography." Robinson emphasises that "the totality of the person [Jesus] is not to be sought in terms of chronological and developmental continuity."[2] All that matters is the *kergyma, i.e.,* the encounter of the believer with the Christ—the Christ whom the Gospels do not present as "the historical Jesus in distinction from the *kerygma.*"[3]

The exclusive emphasis on the existential-experiential Jesus of the *kerygma* is also the stance of liberal Catholic theologians. Thus, Malachi Martin professes that "Jesus has no past, will not come again, and in loving action is dissolving the molds of our spent society." For Martin, "the Jesus Self . . . is love, not merely a loving person; spirit, not simply a spirit. . . . He did not come in order to depart, and need not come again because he never went away."[4]

Martin describes *Jesus Now* as "a journey through the quagmire of distortions, defamations and illusions" piled around our view of Jesus by historians and theologians who are insensitive to the experiential-existential awareness of Jesus. Among the distortions that gave rise to "The Non-Christian Jesus Figures" Martin also analyses the dual Jesus image projected by Jews—the Jesus of the crucifixion (in whose name Jews were persecuted) and the "Jesus-One-of-Us-After-All" of Jewish scholars (who emphasise the Jewishness of Jesus). Martin avers that neither image does justice to the Jesus whom Christians should encounter as "saviour, healer, compassionate God," not in a dogmatic sense but in an existential encounter.

One may well ask whether these trends and orientations of New Testament scholars and theologians do not render irrelevant the works of Jewish scholars who take issue with the Gospel accounts of Jesus's trial and death. These works are, indeed, irrelevant for the Gonzelmanns and Martins who know that, while the Gospels tell about a historical person (*i.e.,* a person who lived), the story they tell is not history. However, the vast majority of Christians—laity and clergy—*do* believe in the Gospel as History by the historian's definition. They lack the sophistication of the New Testament scholars who, in order to encounter the *kerygmatic* Jesus, cleanse his image from what they consider *pseudo-historical* accretions of the Gospels. Still, although Christian clergymen are at home in New Testament form criticism, they preach and teach the Jesus of the Gospels in the pulpit and the church classroom.

[2] James M. Robinson, *A New Quest of the Historical Jesus* (London, 7th impression 1971) pp. 69, 94–95.

[3] For the history of the evolution of modern N.T.scholarship, see: Werner George Kuemmel, *The New Testament, The History of the Investigation of its Problems* (1972).

[4] Malachi Martin, *Jesus Now* (1973).

Jesus, or Christ?

By Joel Carmichael

THE FORMULA of a "Jewish" or "political Jesus", while attractive intellectually, is profoundly incoherent. All Christianity is rooted in the Incarnation, culminating in the Redemptive Crucifixion. However interpreted and ramified, the concept of the Deity's embodiment in a human being as part of a mythological drama of personal and collective salvation is fundamental.

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Its elimination makes the structure meaningless.

This concept is also, of course, the very antithesis of Judaism, in which God, having created the world, withdraws so far beyond history that people can carry out his injunctions without much further concern. What, then, is the "Jewish Jesus"? It carries us back into history, in which a "Jewish Jesus" can only mean that Jesus did something that brought about something *else*—namely, a belief that he represented something *extra*-historical.

In his own age, as now assessed by the bulk of uncommitted scholars, his career, like that of the many other Jewish Messianists who were "Forcing the End"—hastening the Kingdom of God by human action—was encompassed by Jewish national outrage at the Roman idolaters grinding the Holy People into the ground. Militants were determined to rectify the intolerable situation. Historically speaking, Jesus's failure was a routine occurrence—a defeat for yet another of the countless rebels against Rome.

But if that is history, why should it interest anyone with religious emotions? It is *merely* history: the interplay of human concerns, ambitions, hopes, disappointments. Who, ultimately, cares?

Jews, of course, might be interested in Jesus's career as an incident in their own immemorial national existence; but for them it means, if anything, less than it does even for non-believing Christians; or, rather, Jews would only share the interest of all mankind in the historical matrix of a religion taking in a third of mankind and hence a basic factor of world history. Nothing else.

The "Jewish Jesus" would merely refer to Jesus's origins: he was born a Jew. This is simply a misleading way of saying that, as far as Christian origins are concerned, nothing happened at all. It was all a later delusion, a subsequent legend, a retrospective myth, a post-facto system generated by longings that (a little incomprehensibly) found in the systematic misunderstanding of Paul's time-bound Letters a groundwork for theological elaboration. But, again, if that is so, why is there any interest in these events on the part of both Christian believers and non-believers, plus the rest of mankind?

This is, plainly, the crux of the matter. In our increasingly disreligious age Christians are called on to cope with a singular fact. A "leap of faith" is required to affirm not merely propositions, no doubt unverifiable, about the nature of the world, but wholly verifiable propositions embedded in *documents*. For Christianity is unique among all religions in linking its kernel to a unique event demonstrated by writings that can be scrutinised and analysed. For Christians the intertwining of theology and history is essential—for without the Incarnation *there is nothing*.

There is nothing in the simple sense that without the Incarnation all the sayings attributed to Jesus—in any case so scanty!—are plainly drawn from Judaism. Surely no modern Protestant scholar would claim anything original there at all. Protestants, and Catholics *a fortiori*, must maintain that the *fact* of Jesus is basic. Thus, if Jesus was not divine nothing is left. Without the Incarnation we merely confront echoes of Judaism, echoes of the pagan Mystery religions, some speculations (in Paul's Letters, the Gospel of John, *etc.*).

Catholics, to be sure, are shielded by the "Church tradition." The true locus of their worship is, we can see, the semi-magical institution of the Church itself: the "leap of faith" that keeps them there is invulnerable.

Protestants are wide open. At bottom, indeed, the whole enterprise of "Higher Criticism", aside from the handful of Jewish scholars who contributed to it, was (in Albert Schweitzer's phrase) the masterpiece of Protestant German theology. Having generally begun as pious believers in Jesus as "founder" of Christianity (a notion they long since discarded), these well-meaning men, mostly of outstanding intellect, spent their lives sawing away at the bough they were sitting on. When it snapped, what a fall was there!

Many scholars, sub-scholars and dilettantes are still scuttling about the débris of Christian tradition, looking for a bolt-hole. If the "Jewish Jesus" means anything at all, no wonder there are so many ghosts of anti-Semitism hovering around this curious subject!

The Jewish Jesus & Politics

By Rosemary Radford Ruether

I REGARD, as should be evident from my recent study of the Christian roots of anti-Semitism[1] the basic tenets of the "Jewish Jesus" as the important hermeneutical key for differentiating the historical Jesus from the spiritualising and anti-Semitic interpretations.

One of the problems, however, that I find with this position is certain elements of unhistoricity in its *own* view of Jesus's time: namely, the tendency

[1] *Faith and Fratricide* (Seabury Press, 1974).

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to identify Judaism with the "normative Judaism" of the Talmud that grew up after the Fall of Jerusalem. The anti-apocalypticism that developed in the rabbinic tradition after the Jewish Wars (and which was renewed in modern Jewish scholarship as a result of the experience of the Sabbatian movement) also tended to make Jewish scholarship unsympathetic to the plurality of the messianic sectarian currents of the Judaism in which Jesus must have moved and from which the first Christian movement originally sprung.

Let me start with the matter of Jesus's conflicts with the "Scribes and the Pharisees" in the gospels. Maccoby's position (admittedly a great simplification of any "Jewish position" taken by particular Jewish scholars) would regard this conflict as simply unhistorical. Jesus was fully a member of the Pharisaic club. Clearly there are some possibilities in between this view and the traditional Christian one. I would suggest something like the following. Jesus, along with a number of other popular preachers and teachers of the period, did not operate within the disciplined circles of the Pharisaic communities. He advocated the cause of the *am ha'aretz*, who could not afford these élite ways of salvation. He criticised the ostentatiousness and the gaps between word and deed of Pharisaic circles. The content of most of these criticisms can, on examination, be recognised to be versions of teaching traditions which flow into the Jewish (Talmudic) tradition itself. But this does not mean that, on a social level, there was not real criticism on one side and coldness on the other. But it was one within, and not against, the Jewish tradition.

Some of Jesus's sayings about this criticism were passed down in Christian oral tradition. They did not enter into the internal memories of the teaching circles he may have criticised because, for them, such criticisms were not worth discussing. They were *not* the cause of a build-up of hostility leading to Jesus's death. This was caused by the Roman reaction to Jesus's messianic preaching which they perceived as politically subversive.

The interpretation of Jesus's sayings about the Pharisees took on a new meaning, and were extensively reworked in the Church tradition represented by the Gospels, in the light of the *new* hostility generated by Christian attempts to preach Jesus as the Christ, after his death, in the synagogues of Judaea and then in the Diaspora. The teachers and leaders of the synagogues rebuffed these missionary efforts, and Jesus's sayings were reworked to portray them as a repudiation by Jesus of the Pharisees *as such* (and even of Judaism). These religious leaders of Judaism, moreover, are seen as *internalising* a hostility to Jesus, leading to a religious, rather than a political, explanation for Jesus's death: *i.e.* as Judaism's sin in rejecting the Messiah.

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SECONDLY, IT SEEMS to me unhistorical to portray the hostility between the Church and official Judaism as motivated simply by the gentilisation of the Church. One must see the earliest Jewish Christianity as a messianic sect. While believing itself to be the "true Israel", and even among those who were observant of the Law, it nevertheless developed the antagonistic views, typical of such sects, against the official Judaism which ignored or rebuffed them (witness the hostility between the sect and what it sees as the wicked establishment in the Dead Sea Scrolls). Moreover, even as Christianity developed various ideas (such as Logos theology) that had roots in Greek philosophy, Christians continued a fierce anti-paganism and had no consciousness of assimilating non-Jewish ideas, because they took such interpretations from a larger Hellenised Jewish milieu. Thus, when we take into consideration the sectarian and Hellenistic plurality within Judaism of the period, the transition between what Jesus was and what Christianity became by the end of the first century becomes more plausible, without so much resort to assertions of "total fabrications" or "borrowing from mystery religions of Adonis."

THE MOST IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION of the Jewish view of Jesus is to force Christians to deal with the Jewish understanding of the Messianic idea, which Jesus also surely held. The Christian mystification of the word "Christ" seems to me the root of the misunderstandings between the two faiths. It is the chief source of the present backlash in New Testament studies against a "political" Messiah. As Hyam Maccoby rightly points out, the political character of Messianism is generally misunderstood by Christian critics. They turn it into a divorce between "spiritual" religion and "secular" politics foreign to the Jewish milieu of the times. Messianism is the "politics of God", not of Caesar.

The preaching of the Kingdom of God means a divine intervention to establish a world order of justice and peace. Jesus hoped for such a messianic intervention and preached its imminence.

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He was crucified because the Roman authorities, and their Jewish collaborators, saw this as politically subversive (in the secular sense). Jesus probably did not claim the Davidic throne directly. There is clear evidence of his rejection of popular efforts to make him do so. But this is not because his view of Messianism was apolitical—but because, in accordance with higher Jewish religious tradition, he believed that it must come about through repentance and through the intervention of God. It could not be forced inappropriately. In a similar fashion he restrained his own Zealot followers from "picking up the sword" at the time of his arrest.

Up to the last minute Jesus hoped that the great world revolution of God's intervention was about to begin. He died in that hope, not only betrayed by his own followers, but suspecting that he was betrayed by God as well. His followers scattered in dismay, repudiating him on all sides. Then they reassembled in their shame to reaffirm the truth of his memory and his hope.

But they also cast the sin of their own betrayal angrily upon those outside their circle whom they wished to see as responsible for this betrayal. This real, human drama tells a more important story than all the "Christs of faith" which began to be constructed at that point (and which did not begin with Paul).

Reply

By Hyam Maccoby

IN MY ARTICLE "Is the Political Jesus Dead?", I tried to give an account of the "Jewish Jesus" theory in the context of recent New Testament scholarship. The comments offered raise various questions which may be summarised as follows:

(1) Is the "Jewish Jesus" theory correct?

(2) What is its status as a theory (*i.e.*, what degree of probability is claimed for it)?

(3) Did I place it in context correctly, especially in relation to the current state of the "historical Jesus" question?

(4) Does it matter?

(5) Did I adopt the correct *tone*, as a Jewish writer, towards Christian writers?

Perhaps I should also mention certain questions or issues that were *not* raised. I find it strange that no one even mentioned my exposé of a respected New Testament scholar, Professor Ethelbert Stauffer, as an old-time pro-Nazi. A recently published work, *Open Thy Mouth for the Dumb*, by Richard Gutteridge, tells the story of the support given by Protestant theologians and clergymen to the anti-Semitic programmes in Germany. I have no confidence that this story has ended, given suitable conditions of economic distress and national loss of morale in any country in Christendom; and some of the present trends in New Testament scholarship afford no ground for reassurance. If I am told that there is no need to worry, because New Testament scholarship is all pure disinterested research without any anti-Semitic overtones (even when the demands of truth lead to conclusions damaging to the Jewish self-image), I can only reply that I would be most happy to think that this was the case; but the same tone of utter objectivity was adopted by the theologians of Germany in the pre-Hitler and Hitler period. A tone of ice-cold objectivity and casual, unemphasised, "tentative" conclusions are not always incompatible with complicity with ultimate evil.

But, it may be objected, one cannot judge New Testament scholarship by the criterion of whether its conclusions are "good for the Jews" or not. Surely Jews must face the fact that historical research may lead to conclusions which are unpalatable to them, *e.g.*, that crucifixion was a Jewish punishment, or that the Pharisees were inhumane legalists. Such conclusions cannot be ruled out *a priori* on the ground that they "may lead to anti-Semitism." And anyway, adverse judgments on the Jews of Jesus's time have no relevance whatever (it may be said) to the attitude adopted by a rational person to the Jews of today, any more than one would hate modern-day inhabitants of Athens because of the treatment received by Socrates in the 4th century B.C.

This sounds reasonable enough, but, unfortunately, it will not do. If Socrates had become the god of a world-wide religion in which the word "Athenian" had become a term of horror and anathema, synonymous with "traitor", "diabolist" and "deicide"—if the word "Athenian" had been drummed into the minds of children over a period of centuries until its very sound conjured up pictures of desecration, nameless rites, murder—even then, the case would lack some of the most fateful ingredients of the Jewish-Christian embroilment. For example, the continuance of Judaism as a rival world-religion constantly challenging the claims of Christianity; the Oedipal Christian challenge to the world-role of the Jews as the Israelite "nation of priests"; the role of Christ as the sacrificial Victim whose death rolls away the sins of the world, provided that the Jews are saddled with the sacred/accursed role of the Executioner without whom the Sacrifice could not occur. . . .

We are dealing here with a complex of passions, hopes, and desperations that cannot be dispelled by instant rationalism, or the switched-on

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"inter-faith smile." We need an enquiry on the deepest level. Only part of that enquiry (but an important part) is the historical one; what actually happened on that day when the sun is said to have darkened and the curtain of the Holy of Holies was rent in two? What actually led up to the death on a Roman cross of Rabbi Jesus ben Joseph?

It is not merely a polite "research" problem. We are probing into the causes of a volcanic eruption which is still rumbling, and which only a moment ago claimed 6,000,000 victims in circumstances of the most profound human evil and cruelty, including the deliberate and bestial murder of millions of children. We must certainly keep our heads in this enquiry, and try to be as objective as possible; but let us not pretend that the enquiry is on the same emotional level as probing the causes of the decline of the Sassanid dynasty, or the fall of Carthage. We are probing the ground on which Western civilisation stands.

WHAT, THEN, IS THE STATUS of the "Jewish position" on Jesus (*i.e.*, the view that Jesus lived and died as a Jew, made no attempt to found a new religion, and came into fatal conflict with the Romans, not any Jews who were representative of Judaism)? The main point about the "Jewish position" is that it attempts to answer this question: "If the Christian myth about Jesus is not historically true, what other more historical reconstruction would make sense of the facts?" Any reconstruction is unsatisfactory which bolsters the myth that the advent of Jesus was a breakthrough of the forces of Light against the forces of Darkness, with the Jews as the chief representatives of Darkness. In particular, any explanation must recognise the historical role of the Pharisees as a great spiritual and humanitarian movement, instead of giving them a "Judas-role." This is not merely a question of historical justice to a long-dead movement. The blackening of the Pharisees (who were the founders of the Judaism of the medieval and modern worlds) amounts to an attempt to obliterate Judaism altogether; it is part of a Christian effort to deny Judaism any *raison d'être* after the advent of Christianity; in fact, it is part of the take-over bid by which Christian Churches sought to cannibalise Judaism and assume its *mana*. Christian myth demands and involves the myth of the failure and supersession of Judaism. It is only recently that Christian scholars like James Parkes and Rosemary Ruether have realised the necessity to develop a form of Christianity *not* based on the denigration and supersession of Judaism; and these scholars have realised that this involves, and is involved by, a new historical account of Jesus's relation to the Pharisees, and a critical attitude to those aspects of the Gospels which convey the message, "This is the story of how the wicked Jews ceased to be the people of God."

THE REHABILITATION OF THE PHARISEES was brought about by the labours of Christian scholars such as Travers Herford, George Foot Moore and James Parkes. Jewish scholars, of course, needed no such rehabilitation; the Pharisees to them were what the Early Fathers are to the Christians. But to Christians, the new understanding of the Pharisees came as a bomb-shell, because it showed that an important part of the Christian story was *historically false*. Many of the elements of Jesus's character and teaching which the Church had always claimed as "new" and "epoch-making" were shown to be part of the everyday character and teaching of the Pharisee movement. At the same time, the elements of Christianity which *do* differentiate it sharply from Judaism—the deification of Jesus, the Atonement of the Cross, the doctrines of Salvation, Original Sin and Predestination—were seen to have originated *later* than the lifetime of Jesus, and also to be part and parcel of Hellenistic mystical religiosity. This is the problem of present-day Christianity: can the superiority of Christianity be maintained? Or (taking the matter further, as James Parkes and Rosemary Ruether have done) should the 2000-year claim to superiority be abandoned and some theory of the parallel validity of Judaism and Christianity be developed? And here we meet the question, put by Rosemary Ruether with agonising honesty: Can Christianity survive at all—once its anti-Judaism has been excised?

The heart, then, of the dilemma of present-day Christianity is the new knowledge (new to Christians, at any rate) of the Pharisee movement. In answer to the question put to me about the historical status of the "Jewish position", I would simply say this: that many historical theories about Jesus are still possible, and many versions even of the "Jewish position" are possible; but it is no longer possible to build any tenable theory on the picture of the Pharisees which is given in the Gospels. It is a picture which has been proved to be false. This being so, the alleged causes of conflict between Jesus and the Pharisees (Jesus's "blasphemy" in claiming to be the Messiah, his healing on the Sabbath, *etc.*) are unhistorical. Some other reasons must be found for his death on the cross. And the natural reason that offers itself is that he antagonised the Romans and so brought on himself a Roman death. But how it was that he antagonised the Romans—and to what degree and in what style

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he was an opponent of the Roman régime—is a matter of conjecture and a field for competing theories. My own view, which I argued in my book *Revolution in Judaea* (1973), is that Jesus, though not a pacifist, was not a Zealot guerrilla leader either, but an apocalyptic prophet-Messiah who expected a miracle on the Mount of Olives, by which the Romans would be overthrown.

I NOW TURN to specific points made by the scholars who have commented on my article.

SAMUEL SANDMEL is concerned about the "predicament of honourable, decent Christian scholars", and he outlines this predicament very ably. But he thinks that I do not sympathise sufficiently with it. The word "predicament" seems to me inadequate; "agony" is nearer the mark, and sympathy is irrelevant, since what is needed is active help in the strenuous wrestling with which Christians are now confronted. Any Christian scholar who feels himself to be merely in a "predicament" is already on the way to finding some convenient evasion, which, fitted up with footnotes and published in some learned journal (the more obscure the better) will eventually be quoted in the theological colleges and schools as the last word in modern scholarship. Professor Sandmel, with his polite desire to play the academic game exactly according to the rules, is in danger of falling into an academic limbo where nothing really matters, while the real struggle is going on somewhere else. I will not put Samuel Sandmel into the same category as certain Jewish scholars who have written about the New Testament with such circumspection that one could imagine them writing learned monographs on the use of the semi-colon in *Mein Kampf*. Sandmel, on the contrary, has had some important things to say; but his desire to wrap them up in the approved manner has robbed his utterances of much of their significance.

To be frank, I think that the ultra-mild tone adopted by many Jewish scholars in discussing the New Testament (except when arguing with other Jewish scholars) is not due to either politeness or sympathy, but to something which I can only refer to as *fear*. This is understandable in view of the history of Jewish-Christian relations, but it would show a greater appreciation of Christian advance towards friendliness and understanding if Jewish scholars felt able to take a more robust tone, such as is taken for granted in other areas of controversy. As it is, not only is an unnaturally lamb-like tone adopted, but some Jewish scholars even seek to take up placatory anti-Jewish positions for which there is no evidence that would be accepted by them in any other context.

Sandmel's pained surprise that I should publish my views in ENCOUNTER, rather than in the decent obscurity of a learned journal, is further evidence of the timidity which he shows in deprecating my "belligerence." ENCOUNTER is a forum for the kind of broad survey which passes beyond the realm of fact-gathering and minute enquiry into the realm of value-judgment and general intellectual orientation. If there were no such forum, the general statement would never be made except in a surreptitious, insinuating way, in footnotes and asides, where either it loses all impact (if it is against the trend), or (if it furthers the *status quo*) it works insidiously and subliminally under the authority of an ensconced academicism. It would be an excellent thing if certain leading academics in all fields were somehow compelled to write a general survey for ENCOUNTER of what exactly they are up to.

TRUDE WEISS-ROSMARIN takes issue with me for trying to reconstruct "the historical Jesus", which she regards as an out-dated enterprise. The trouble with Dr Weiss-Rosmarin is that events have overtaken her. She is still living blissfully in the age of Rudolf Bultmann, and is unaware of the new trend in Christian New Testament studies which I have labelled "the back-lash." This, under the general inspiration and tutelage of Ethelbert Stauffer and Josef Blinzler, is now a flourishing concern. It is true, of course, that the Bultmannite movement has not come to an end, and has even produced new developments in the epigonic movement known as the "New Hermeneutics", which has reached new heights of gobbledygook (a specimen of which, from the writings of James M. Robinson, is quoted by Dr Weiss-Rosmarin with apparent approval).

It may be doubted, however, whether even Bultmannism is the source of comfort that Dr Weiss-Rosmarin thinks. Firstly, the removal of the Christian message to the realm of "*kerygma*" (*i.e.*, in plain terms, fantasy) does not make it any more acceptable. The Jews still figure in it as symbolic representatives of Evil, though now allegedly on a non-historical plane. But those who immerse themselves in a dream world are always liable to carry over their dream-conceptions into reality. Even as "metaphorical" figures of Evil, the Jews are far from safe, especially as the elevation of the Christian myth to a non-historical plane gives it a renewed canonical and infallible quality, like that of a fairy-tale. The name "New Hermeneutics" is

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perhaps appropriate, since it describes a New Fundamentalism.[1]

Secondly, Bultmannism is never so purged of the "historical Jesus" as it pretends to be. Bultmann himself, while professing to know nothing about the historical Jesus, smuggled in a fairly definite picture of the historical Jesus at strategic points in his theory. Equally, members of the "back-lash" movement are liable, when hard-pressed, to fall back on a Bultmannian posture. The two attitudes—agnosticism about the historical Jesus, and renewal of the search for him—often act together as alternate strategies, as if to say, "This is how Jesus was. . . . But if you disagree—who knows anything about the historical Jesus?"

JOEL CARMICHAEL thinks that the whole subject is profoundly uninteresting. If Jesus was not *divine*, then Christianity is completely exploded, and the historical Jesus loses all universal interest and becomes a minor historical figure comparable to Judas of Galilee. Thus there is nothing left to talk about.

This seems a curious argument. At the very least, the question of "how Christianity began" is one of the most important questions that can be asked on the purely historical level—more important, for example, than the question of "the decline and fall of the Roman Empire." (Carmichael admits that the "matrix of a religion taking in a third of mankind" is "a basic factor of world history", but adds curiously that it is "nothing else"!) But on the religious level, Carmichael seems unaware of what Dr Weiss-Rosmarin was *too* aware of, that Christianity can survive the discarding of the divinity of the historical Jesus by substituting the divinity of the "risen" Jesus—in other words, by putting the whole thing on to a symbolic or "mythical" plane. This is Bultmannism; an interesting development in theology brought about precisely by the critical study of the historical, "Jewish" Jesus. Whether Christian faith can breathe in this rarefied atmosphere is the point at issue in present-day Protestant theology. The historical Jesus is being cautiously revived; and it is a matter of some concern that the Gospel picture of the malevolent Pharisees is being revived together with him. These are not, as Carmichael seems to think, dead issues.

Further, the "Jewish" or "political" Jesus is *not*, as Carmichael believes, a figure devoid of religious interest. This is to adopt a Christian definition of religion, by which politics are irredeemably secular. Was Elijah a religious figure? Obviously he was, but his conflict with King Ahab, his journey to crown a new King of Syria, and many other incidents in his career would nowadays be called "political." The "Jewish position" on Jesus makes him "political" only in the same sense as Elijah, *i.e.*, it puts him into the Jewish tradition of political religion, and removes him from the other-worldly, anti-political religion of the Johannine tradition. The "Jewish Jesus" is very much a religious figure, and of a kind which the modern world needs to understand.

Finally, I do not recognise Judaism in Carmichael's account of a God who "having created the world, withdraws . . . far beyond history." The Old Testament God takes an almost obsessive interest in history. Nor is there any truth in the statement that "Christianity is unique among all religions in linking its kernel to a unique event demonstrated by writings that can be scrutinised. . . ." Judaism takes its kernel from the unique event of the Exodus and the Revelation on Mount Sinai, demonstrated by the Pentateuch or Torah. Christianity's holy book, the Gospels, arose—as did the Koran in Islam—as a rival document to the Torah.

ROSEMARY RUETHER agrees with me on the most important matters at issue: that the roots of anti-Semitism are to be found in the Gospel misrepresentation of the Pharisee movement, and the Christian attempt to nullify and supersede Judaism, that Jesus's death came about from a political clash with Rome, not a religious clash with Judaism, that the Jewish "political" Messianism is a spiritual conception which is preferable to the anti-political, other-worldly (and thus tyranny-accepting) Messianism of the Christian tradition. Dr Ruether's *Faith and*

[1] An even newer form of fundamentalism is adumbrated by Professor Frank Kermode, commenting in the *Daily Telegraph* (28 February and 13 March) on my ENCOUNTER article on Jesus. Professor Kermode suggests that contradictions in the Gospels (*e.g.*, between pro-Jewish and anti-Jewish attitudes) should be resolved in the manner of literary criticism; as the expression of emotional polarities and ambivalences, rather than as superimposed strata arising from historical fluctuations and conflicts. The Gospels would thus be seen as a "narrative" with the same complexity as that of a great novel.

I agree that the Gospels, in the final analysis, show a love-hate relationship to the Jews which can be regarded as a unified syndrome expressed in a single powerful myth. This is also true of neuroses and psychoses. The historical enquiry of how love turned into hate (or, rather, into "love-hate") still remains valid and important. Kermode would like to discourage such historical enquiry in order to contemplate the beautiful unity, or synthesis of opposing forces, in the end-product. But, surely, *forgetting* that unity and synthesis can be pathological.

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Fratricide is a powerful Christian statement of these positions, and it marks a new era in the relation between Christianity and Judaism.

The points of disagreement between us are relatively minor. I think she underestimates the *variety* which existed within the Pharisee movement. Even the so-called "normative" Judaism of the Talmud had a strong mystical and apocalyptic side. There is no need to postulate "sectarianism" to account for Jesus, since similar charismatic, wonder-working figures existed within the Pharisee movement, *e.g.*, Hanina ben Dosa. Moreover, it was the Pharisees who were the "popular preachers" and who were followed by the ordinary people, as Josephus testifies. The leaders of the Pharisees were themselves drawn from the common people (Hillel was a woodcutter, Shammai a carpenter). Jesus certainly had differences of opinion with other Pharisees; such differences were regarded by the Pharisees as an essential element in the religious life, and the Talmud is full of them.

I cannot conceive any Jewish milieu, however Hellenised, which would have contributed, for example, the Eucharistic idea of consuming the body and blood of Christ. I think we are forced to accept that there was direct Gentile influence on the development of Christianity.

I agree that Jesus expected Messianic success to occur through mass repentance and the miraculous intervention of God. (I argued precisely this in *Revolution in Judaea.*) But this does not mean that he eschewed violent means altogether. Like Gideon, he expected God to send a miracle to help the valiant, not the faint-hearted. That is why he saw to it that on the climactic night (the "two swords" episode in *Luke, XXII*) his followers were armed.

Snow Scene

Holy Sunday morning was the usual
Sunday morning. At "The Old Cross"
Father tipsy as usual, not talking
Much, but dreaming it all in when
Old Mr Church rose up with his two sticks.

Trying but failing to negotiate
The five stone steps from pub to street,
Like a baby falling with a blind
Clutch at the arctic air, lying there
An essential part of his momentum

Broken. Church silenced in the gathering
Crowd. And my father kneeling
In the snow and he who never set a leg
In his life setting this one, his boozy
Mind shedding that hold long enough

For obedience to another's need.
It was part of Holy Sunday's wonder
(The other part sermons of fire)
And our Doctor Murphy saying he
Could not have set it better himself,

And my father with that silly smile
He used when praised. Kneeling
In the snow like a do-gooder. The
Parson thanking the Lord for Joe. Like
A parish magazine front-page picture.

Madge Hales

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LETTERS

Love & Bertrand Russell

PROFESSOR MAURICE CRANSTON tells us [ENCOUNTER, April] that "late in life" Bertrand Russell recalled:

> "My more profound feelings have remained always solitary and have found in human things no companionship. The sea, the stars, the night wind in waste places mean more to me than even the human beings I love best, and I am conscious that human affection is to me at bottom an attempt to escape from the vain search for God."

This passage appears in the *Autobiography* (Vol. II, page 38) just after a footnote, added by Russell in 1967—presumably even later in life, which reads "This and what follows is no longer true."

I have always assumed that amendment to reflect the fulfilment Russell found in his last marriage. The dedication of the first volume of his *Autobiography* (also 1967) ends:

> "After so many lonely years,
> I know what life and love may be.
> Now, if I sleep,
> I shall sleep fulfilled."

and the second paragraph of the Prologue contains:

> "I have sought love, first, because it brings ecstacy... next because it relieves loneliness—that terrible loneliness in which one shivering consciousness looks over the rim of the world into the cold unfathomable lifeless abyss . . . and though it might seem too good for human life, this is what—at last—I have found."

Russell seems to go out of his way to tell us, first, that in his marriage to Edith Finch he found companionship, peace and love, and secondly that these things had previously (a very long time!) eluded him. To that extent the first quotation is fairly used, as it stands, in relation to Russell's earlier life—which certainly occupies the foreground of Professor Cranston's attention in this part of his article. But surely, intentionally or not, he conveys the impression that Russell "remained always solitary" and "found in human things no companionship" to the end of his life. The quotation is introduced as a recollection "late in life" and soon we are told "But, Lady Katherine [Russell's daughter] goes on to say, her father 'never gave his whole heart to anyone, though he tried.'"

Later, Professor Cranston does mention Russell's fourth marriage, but he accords it only a rather dismissive, certainly unenthusiastic, clause in a sentence principally about Ralph Schoenmann. It is not that I think Professor Cranston *ought* to have made more of this marriage and its effects, it is rather that I am curious to know why he didn't. The change from the Russell of the first quotation to the Russell proclaimed in 1967 seems, to me, a profoundly happy, heartening and important one—worthy, at least, of a footnote!

RICHARD NELMES

Edinburgh

Realism v. Experiment

I HAVE JUST SEEN the review of *Language, Truth and Poetry* by Ronald Hayman in the July ENCOUNTER, and I write to express my thanks for it, and to append a footnote to his remarks.

He makes me regret that I did not mention Barthes' *S/Z*, as he would have liked. In fact I believe that it would have strengthened my contention that "voiding [language] of its content, and attributing to words only such meaning as they have in contrast to each other" does not help us much in literature. For it seems to me that, in *S/Z*, Barthes' final "apparatus", or numbered list of oppositions, is both abstract and opaque. It sits there on the page, but is not actively used by himself when he discusses *Sarrasine*. Instead, he interprets the story in terms of the *positive* (in this case Freudian) content that he sees there.

This is not to deny the usefulness of Saussure's paradox about language containing "only differences without positive terms." But this usefulness can hardly apply to literature if, as my book suggests, its main purpose is precisely to bring our meanings to life, to fill them with content. And Saussure himself goes on to say in the same passage that his remark is true only if one considers signified and signifier separately (or, very approximately, abstracts words from their meanings).

GRAHAM DUNSTAN MARTIN

Edinburgh

IF DAVID LODGE ["The Novel & the Market", Sep. and "Letters" Dec.] agrees with Ortega that "To enjoy a novel we must feel surrounded by it on all sides", he must believe that any chink in the curtain of illusion is an interruption to the enjoyment. But very few of the novelists he lists "at random" were consistently committed to "pseudo-historical fictional narrative." In Richardson's fiction, the epistolary convention works as a constant reminder of literary artificiality. It also encourages sentiment to elbow history out of the limelight.

Balzac was aiming "to write the history that so many historians have forgotten about, the history of manners (*moeurs*)" but his digressions, his comments from the sidelines and his obtrusive metaphors create large holes in the curtain of illusion. Proust rightly objected to "Her complexion had taken on the warm tone of a vase with a light inside it." History bulks large in Tolstoy's fiction, but *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina* are both unlike Balzac's novels in giving us only minimal and impressionistic glimpses of the big houses where the main scenes are set, while the descriptions of a landscape or a character's clothes are un-Balzacian in the intensity of their correlation with the life inside the mind.

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I suppose Arnold Bennett's raw material could loosely be described as social history, but it is misleading to juxtapose his name with George Eliot's. Henry James accused Balzac of being preoccupied with the small change of material existence; Bennett was still more preoccupied with it, and, as Edwin Muir observed, there have been very few writers who have described more fully without describing visually. So the curtain is threadbare. The history in Isherwood's Berlin books is different again: a paraphrase of diary material.

Where then is the "realistic tradition" from which Doris Lessing is progressively disengaging herself through various kinds of "expériment"? Surely David Lodge cannot believe that there is more continuity between Richardson and Isherwood than between her early Martha Quest novels and her recent work.

To insist that realism and experiment are antithetical is to deny the possibility of a realistic experiment—a technique devised to present a more complete and more accurate rendering of human experience. I'd be interested to know whether Professor Lodge considers *Ulysses* to be realistic. Doesn't it both widen and tighten the novel's grip on reality? Are the impressions that flicker across a brain less real than a telephone? What does one possess of the telephone's reality except a mental impression? David Lodge writes about "the limitations of realism as a way of rendering reality" as if *realism* and *reality* were words which could each be adequately defined in one simple sentence.

George Moore spoke of "that knowledge of form which sustains the artist like a crutch in his examination of the model, and which as it were dictates to the eye what it must see." This is not so remote from some of the points Roland Barthes makes in *S/Z*: that realism is badly named; that the realistic writer always carries an empty frame around with him; that he is not so much copying reality as copying a copy of it; that in practice, mimesis is always pastiche.

It can be argued that Balzac's *Sarrasine* provides Barthes with an untypically convenient example of "the infinite circularity of codes", and I find it very disappointing that he fails to differentiate between the story and the story-within-the story, or between Balzac's uses of the narrative "I." But I cannot agree with Dr Graham Dunstan Martin that Barthes fails to make active use of his apparatus. Whatever reservations we have about his denotation of his five basic codes, his actual analysis of the story is stimulating in the same way that Leavis's work so often is—prodding us into reading the text more thoughtfully and more carefully. *S/Z* should also have the effect of forcing us to be more careful with the words "realism" and "reality."

RONALD HAYMAN

London

Crossman & Prejudice

ONE OF YOUR READERS has sent me a quotation from something Richard Crossman wrote some three decades ago which he believes may explain the peculiar reference in Crossman's diaries to "a rich Jew with a Rolls Royce" (ENCOUNTER, February 1977). The quotation reads as follows:

> "... One of the things I learned when, as a member of the Anglo-American Committee, I first came into contact with the Jewish people, was that I myself suffer from latent anti-Semitism.
>
> All of us Gentiles carry the bacillus in our veins, and at any moment some little tiff with a Jew may bring on the disease, destroying one's sense of fair play and decency. . . ."
>
> (R. H. S. Crossman, *Sunday Pictorial* column, 30 January 1949)

ARNOLD BEICHMAN

University of Massachusetts
Boston, Mass.

Points about the Intellectuals

BEWARE OF vulgar Marxism! Mr A. D. Harvey writes in the December issue that unemployment among the German intellectuals was responsible for their conversion to Nazism.

To this I would contribute the following observations: (*1*) these kids were Nazis already when they went to high school (how do I know—because I went to school with them). Their political engagement cannot have been related to their employment potentialities.

(*2*) Nor can they be related to the Depression, since they turned Nazi *before* the depression.

(*3*) With reference to the revolution of 1848, it is preposterous to assert that Karl Marx became a communist because he was unemployed. It is probably more accurate to say that many intellectuals of his generation became unemployed because they were not satisfied with the kind of employment to which their training had opened the access for them.

(*4*) Being alienated is not tantamount to being dissatisfied; on the contrary, it is a condition which occurs to those who are *employed* in capitalistic enterprise, and by Mr Harvey's measurements, ought to be satisfied.

(*5*) If one wishes to indulge in sociological *Ideologie-Kritik*, then one should first take account of the general condition of the class from which the Nazi students came (in the case of my classmates: shopkeepers) and then try to find out whether indeed among those who turned Nazi a higher percentage were (*a*) students, (*b*) unemployed.

For (*6*) the figures which Mr Harvey uses are subject to considerable doubt, partly because of the purposes for which these statistics were collected to begin with; secondly because of the unprofessional use that they were subjected to. The *S.S.* was definitely not a corps of "unemployed"; but many may not have been employed because they were not looking for jobs.

(*7*) It is indeed the privilege of the intellectuals to think in terms of general ideas, or systems, to escape being enmeshed in the petty dealings of the day, or at least to keep the grand view, the perspective in sight.

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London

BRIEF WIT: Mr. Justice Jupp, a newly-appointed High Court judge, took his seat for the first time in London yesterday and said to lawyers: "I think the motto I should adopt on the bench is 'A fool's voice is known by a multitude of words.' I'll say no more."

DAILY TELEGRAPH

London

ROTTEN ROLL: *"Anarchy, anarchy, anarchy," screams a malevolent singer called Johnny Rotten.*

"See ya at the end of the world", he declares as his group the Sex Pistols launch into an extra high-volume slice of rock music and the crowd at the foot of the stage succumb to a glazed kind of frenzy.

The scene is a hot, crowded club in Oxford Street which for one night a week has lately become the centre for a style of music loosely known as punk-rock.

Admirers claim they represent a blow against the superior attitude of established superstars and that their music represents a move back to rebellion and aggression. Equally, it is said, they are an expression of the frustration and nihilism that is current among many young people.

Punks and punk rockers alike appear to place great emphasis on being against almost everything except themselves. The establishment, hippies and intellectuals are all equally despised.

With typical antagonism singer Johnny Rotten refuses to do interviews with the Press. When approached he responds with a terse "F . . . off."

Just as a certain harsh dogmatic attitude pervades the punk rock scene the participants dress in post-Bowie styles that revolve around dyed hair, immaculately torn tee-shirts, leather trousers and chains.

Anne Ferris a 16-year-old with hair dyed blue, said: "My mother is not shocked by anything I do now. When I dyed my hair she just accepted it as another new style."

EVENING STANDARD

London

TWADDLE: *In reviewing the new Concise Oxford Dictionary, Godfrey Smith complains of the "defective" definition of* twat, *but there is more to the definition than he mentions [Francis Bennion writes]. It includes the words "(vulg.) Female genitals." With this meaning the word appears in the seventeenth century Vanity of Vanities.*

His ambition is getting a Cardinal's hat;
They'd send him as soon an old nun's twat.

This is said to have misled Browning into thinking a twat was an article of religious dress, hence the lines near the end of Pippa Passes:

Then, owls and bats,
Cowls and twats,
Monks and nuns, in a cloister's moods
Adjourn to the oak-stump pantry!

If this is not the worst howler in English literature it must come near it.

SUNDAY TIMES

Seoul

PURITY: *Foreign actors no longer appear in South Korean TV commercials, and foreign words are scheduled to be purged from Korean usage. War has been declared on long hair. Politicians, civil servants and entertainers have been warned to end "degenerate" practices.*

It is all part of the "purification" campaign inaugurated by President Chung Hee Park.

Korea's culture, Mr. Park said, must not be "polluted" by an "indiscreet" inflow of foreign influence. Even before the campaign was given its name, "purification," in April, restrictions on some forms of foreign culture were in effect. Television was the chief offender in using foreign words and cited such terms as "hit parade" and "news desk." The word "TV", pronounced in Korean as in English, is all right, because no Korean equivalent exists.

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Cambridge

STRUCTURALISM: Mr Jack Jones, the British trade-union chief, is reported as saying that trade unions in Spain "would not be free until the official structure is eliminated", and that their "official structure" was a "fascist concept." May we know whether he made the same point, *mutatis mutandis*, **to Russian trade union bosses and other representatives of Soviet "official structures", whom he has recently welcomed to this country as guests of the Labour Party? And if not, why not?**

THE TIMES

San Francisco

LA DIFFÉRENCE: *In a year when politicians are deeply suspect, what better way to woo voters than by pronouncing a plague on both our major parties? Samuel Ichiye Hayakawa, 69, famed semanticist and ex-president of San Francisco State College, did precisely that in his campaign for the U.S. Senate from California. A backslid Democrat who now calls himself a "Republican unpredictable", Hayakawa explained the difference between the two this way:*

"Republicans are people who, if you were drowning 50 ft from shore, would throw you a 25 ft. rope and tell you to swim the other 25 ft. because it would be good for your character. Democrats would throw you a 100-ft. rope and then walk away looking for other good deeds to do."

TIME

Hong Kong

CASE OF THE RUNNING DOG: The late Dame Agatha Christie has been denounced in Hong Kong's Communist press here as a running dog for "the rich and the powerful."

In a tirade in the party's leading daily, *Ta Kung Pao*, **she is said to have "described crimes committed by the middle and lower classes of British society but never exposed their social causes. . . .**

"Accordingly in 1971 the Queen made her a Dame Commander of the British Empire."

THE TIMES

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This may, at times, lead them to draw extreme conclusions, and at other times to draw extremely conservative conclusions. Which, does not depend on their particular employment situation but rather on the future of the intellectuals as a class.

(*8*) The long quotation from the Report of the Committee on Relations with Junior Members seems to agree with most other observers that student revolutionaries seek "salvation" rather than jobs. It is true that they have this juvenile attitude to politics because they are out of touch with people engaged in gainful business. But this is so because they are students—not because they are unemployed.

HENRY PACHTER

City University
New York

AUTHORS

Philip Purser is Television Critic of the *Sunday Telegraph*. His latest novel is *The Last Great Tram Race* (Hodder, 1974), and he has recently written for Thames Television *The One and Only Phyllis Dixie*, which will be screened later this year.

John Grigg is a political journalist; he edited *The National and English Review* from 1954–60 and was Columnist for *The Guardian* from 1960–1967. His books include *The Young Lloyd George* (Eyre Methuen, 1973).

Richard Lowenthal was until his recent retirement Professor of International Relations at the Free University in West Berlin and has spent the last year as Visiting Professor at the Research Institute on International Change, Columbia University. His many articles in ENCOUNTER include "Can (and Should) Detente be Saved?" (May 1976) and "The Conservative Utopia" (June 1974). His article in the current issue also appears in the Winter 1976–77 number of *International Journal*, published by the Canadian Institute of International Affairs.

Angus Wilson's account of his time at Oxford is one of twelve original contributions to *My Oxford*, edited by Ann Thwaite, which will shortly be published by Robson Books. (A companion volume, *My Cambridge*, is edited by Ronald Hayman.) Angus Wilson's most recent novel is *As If By Magic* (Secker & Warburg, 1973).

Donald G. MacRae is Professor of Sociology at the London School of Economics, and author of *Ideology and Society* (1960), *Ages and Stages* (Athlone Press, 1975), and *Weber* (Fontana Modern Masters, 1975).

François Bondy is an editor of the monthly *Schweizer Monatshefte* and of *Die Weltwoche* (Zurich) to which he contributes a regular column on people and politics in Europe.

Alan Colquhoun has been in private architectural practice since 1961, after earlier work in Paris and as an Associate of Lyons Israel and Ellis in London. His work includes schools, university buildings, and housing. He has taught at Cambridge, University College, London, and Princeton and Cornell Universities, and is now Principal Lecturer in History and Theory at the Polytechnic of Central London. He contributes to numerous journals of architecture and aesthetics both in Britain and abroad, and is the author of *El Simolisme cultural a l'arquitectura i la crisi del movemento moderno* (1974) and of the forthcoming *Meaning and Change in Architecture* which will be published by Gustav Gili in Barcelona.

Michael Podro is Professor of the History of Art at the University of Essex. His books include *The Manifold in Perception: Theories of Art from Kant to Hildebrand* (Oxford University Press, 1972) and *The Subject and the Medium of Painting*, which Duckworth will publish later this year.

Bevis Hillier formerly Editor of *The Connoisseur*, is Antiques Correspondent of *The Times* and author of several books on the decorative and applied arts, including *Pottery and Porcelain* 1700–1914 (Weidenfeld, 1968), *The World of Art Deco* (Studio Vista, 1973), and *The New Antiques* (Times Books, 1976). He is currently working on an authorised biography of Sir John Betjeman, to be published by John Murray.

Stephen Gardiner has been a practising architect since 1957; his work includes ILEA schools, housing at Milton Keynes, and buildings for handicapped children. He has been architectural critic for *London Magazine* and *The Spectator*, and now writes for *The Observer*. His books include *Le Corbusier* (Fontana Modern Masters, 1974) and *Evolution of the House* (Constable, 1975), and he is currently working on *A Guide to Architecture*, to be published by Elsevier.

Edward Lucie-Smith is a poet and art critic. Among his books are *Movements in Art Since 1945* (rev. ed. Thames & Hudson, 1976), *How the Rich Lived: The Painter as Witness*, and a companion volume, *Work and Struggle*, of which he is co-author (both published by Paddington Press).

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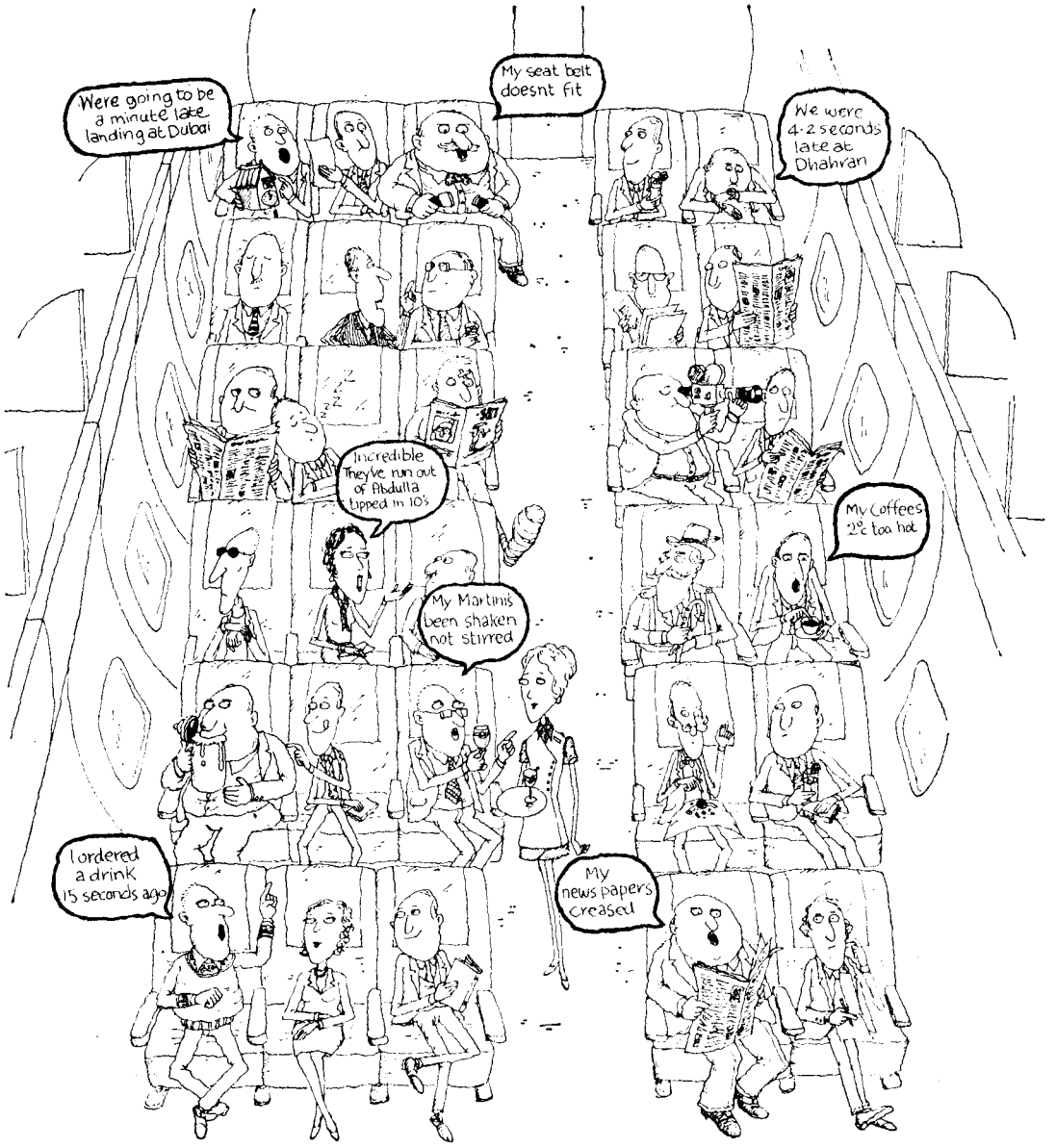
Were going to be a minute late landing at Dubai
My seat belt doesnt fit
We were 4.2 seconds late at Dhahran
Incredible They've run out of Abdulla tipped in 10's
My Martinis been shaken not stirred
My Coffees 2° too hot
I ordered a drink 15 seconds ago
My news papers creased

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